THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 104, NO. 17 NEW YORK, MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1941 NUMBER 1378

More Gloom Than Is Needed

The Americans are a mercurial people. For the last week or two they have been sunk in gloom over what has happened in Yugoslavia, Greece and North Africa. It is true that the German advance has offered a tragic picture of heroic defenders fighting against overwhelming odds and in many cases dying in their tracks to let their comrades get out of the trap. If Franco yields to the pressure and lets the Germans cross Spain to attack Gibraltar, there is likely to be still more bad news. Yet, if we can get a perspective of even a few weeks, the situation does not seem to justify the downcast hearts it has induced.

Only a couple of months ago, it was expected that Hitler would get Yugoslavia by a diplomatic triumph. Everyone knew Greece could not hold out and it was not certain she would even make the effort. In North Africa, the British were fighting on the defensive inside the Egyptian border against an Italian column, not a German one. Wavell's astonishing advance westward across the desert was expected by no one.

Hitler's victory over Yugoslavia and his advance in Greece have cost him the lives of many thousands of his finest troops. The supply of materials from Yugoslavia has been all but stopped for some time, and the vitally important movement of materials up the Danube was curtailed if not halted entirely by the ships sunk at the Iron Gate. When Yugoslavia and Greece finally give up, Germany will have two more countries to add to the list of those she must police, two more countries whose inhabitants hate the Nazis and their philosophy and will only bide their time to be free again. The Balkan campaign has certainly postponed the invasion of England, and, in view of America's increasing momentum, perhaps for a long time. As we point out elsewhere, England could lose the Mediterranean and the whole Near East, and still not lose the war, as long as her morale—and our own—does not crack. It remains true that defeatism is the worst enemy.

The Next Battleground

Leonidas lost the battle of Thermopylae, but the glory was his, while the empire that crushed him vanished long ago. Anyone as superstitious as Hitler should pause before trying to win a place in history by imposing a similar fate on similar heroes.

With the end of resistance in Yugoslavia, and the expected defeat in Greece, Hitler will press on to apply the pincers to Suez and tap Mosul oil. His task on the African arm will be more difficult than that in the Balkans, because there his forces must, like the British, be transported and supplied by sea, and the summer desert is an obstacle more formidable even than the Grecian mountains. Empire forces have been returning from Italian East Africa to face the Germans, while the British navy can both aid them and harass German communications.

On the other side, Hitler must get through Turkey —or Russia—to make further progress. Russia does not want to fight, and very probably has been placated with concessions in Iran. But will Turkey be influenced by her to let the Germans through without opposition? It does not seem likely that Stalin would trust Hitler with the Dardanelles, if he could help it. The British,

CONTENTS

The Week 583

Editorials

Protect the Cargoes! 586
What the FBI Is Doing 587
Taxes Going Up 589

General Articles

Scientists in Uniform: England . Julian Huxley 590
Washington's Stepchild: The Refugee . . . . . Alfred Wagg, 3rd 592
Preparedness for Peace . George Fort Milton 595
Painters and Painting . . Van Wyck Brooks 596
Meeting the Blitz on Labor . . Max Lerner 598
Washington Notes . . . . . T. R. B. 600
Nothing to Write Home About . Otis Ferguson 601
Mahler Before Anschluss . Stanley Ferguson 602
The Bandwagon 603

Correspondence 603

Milton as Social Philosopher . David W. Petegorsky 606

Books in Review

Where the World Is Going . Malcolm Cowley 607
Bertrand Russell's Inquiry . Rubin Gotesky 608
Public Penny-Pinching . . . R. R. Renne 609
The Shadow Line . . . . Muriel Burns 610
A Reader's List 611

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1941, IN THE U.S.A. BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 40 EAST 49TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.
ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879
PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however, are preparing for the worst by landing troops in Iraq. Whether Turkey resists or not, the German legions may before long be threatening Palestine from the north. The Empire lifeline is far from safe.

Still Too Late

Why was Hitler so quickly victorious in the Balkans? The cause was not any lack of courage or good generalship on the part of his opponents. Immensely superior forces, far better armed for mechanical warfare, and a readiness to take the losses necessary for victory, can always, with able organization and command, win battles. The part played by the Luftwaffe, with its apparently inexhaustible supply of dive bombers, probably accounts for the speedy traversing of such difficult terrain.

These forces could be concentrated because of Germany's interior position and land approach to the battleground. Britain and her allies had fewer troops to start with, but they could have stationed a far stronger army in Greece if Britain had had the time and the ships. As it was, the men and supplies available had to be rationed between Greece and Africa. As for the lack of enough ships and planes, the prime cause is Britain's late start, as it has been for every former defeat in the war; but the tale might have been different if this country had been prepared to make up the deficiency. While Germany spreads over Europe, we are just beginning to get into production. Six months saved at the beginning of our effort might have changed the course of history.

Canadian Bridgehead

The economic agreement between Canada and the United States is a striking example of the President's determination to give all possible aid to the British commonwealth. Two important economic decisions are embodied in the understanding. One extends much needed relief to Canadian exchange, which has suffered because since the war Canada has bought so much more from us than we from her. This is to be remedied largely by use of lease-lend credits. The other is to avoid duplication in production by assigning to each country the orders which it is best fitted to turn out, thus bringing the two countries much closer to a single productive unit.

The agreement is rumored to include the possibility of United States troops replacing those of the dominion at strategic points in Canada, thereby releasing Canadian soldiers for service in Britain. Should this be so, it can scarcely fail to strengthen the tie between Canadian outposts and Greenland, which means increased security for British shipping on the first leg of its homeward route. Just as the handing over of destroyers brought this country valuable Atlantic bases, so the present strengthening of Canadian economy and territory will bulwark our safety.

The Other End of the Bridge

However certain our Atlantic bridgehead may be, it will be useless if Britain cannot secure the receiving end. There has been talk of convoys moving across, via Greenland and Iceland, to the north of Scotland. This may be a possible route at certain times of the year, but it is surely not enough to ensure regular delivery. It will be valuable if it exists parallel to a more southerly route—one that can round the north of Ireland to English and Scottish ports on the west. But these waters off Ireland are the hunting grounds of the majority of Nazi submarines and cannot be made even reasonably safe without use by the Royal Navy of Eire's ports and naval bases. In short, our bridge of ships across the Atlantic is largely dependent upon Irish coöperation, and the point has now been reached where the United States should do its utmost to persuade the De Valera government to open its bases to the British. Eire is safe from Hitler today only because she is sheltered by Britain, but she is still basing her actions on the long years when her present protector was her deadliest enemy.

Business or Defense?

General Motors will freeze 1942 automobile models through 1943, and the entire industry has agreed to shift 20 percent of capacity from civilian to military production. The first move, which will release 15,000,000 man-hours in machine-tool production, comes a year after it was first advocated. The second takes effect on August 1, almost two years after the beginning of the war, eight years after Hitler got German production under way and perhaps a month or two after it might have helped Britain most effectively. What is alarming is that the government is getting guns when it suits business and not when they are needed. This is a critical summer in the history of the world. We go into it with our cannon-equipped, high-ceiling fighter planes largely on paper. Just the other day the army tested the first of our twenty-eight-ton tanks. We are weak in everything except small-arms fire. The army has anti-aircraft guns to defend only half of our Eastern seaboard cities, and the range of these is so low that modern bombers could fly at will above their fire. As Hanson Baldwin revealed in The New York Times, the navy does not have enough anti-aircraft properly to protect our warships, let alone our merchant marine.

Note for Labor Baiters

Outside of the soft-coal stoppage, which President Roosevelt's appeal will probably have ended before this note reaches our readers, there are now only a few thousand men on strike in defense industries. Arthur Krock twits Sidney Hillman because he said to the press there were only 8,000, and later testified before

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a congressional committee that there were 15,000; but the quibble only emphasizes the insignificance of the problem. No new troubles of importance are now in prospect. In these circumstances the Vinson bill, unwise as it is, seems more uncalled for than ever. The President's Mediation Board has scored a dramatic success, but it has done so because it used intelligent mediation of grievances instead of concerning itself with formal rules and abstract fighting words. Labor wants to coöperate if it is granted half a chance, but you don't invite coöperation by making heated charges and imposing drastic penalties.

No Pipe Line to Moscow

Communists in New York City staged a demonstration the other day in front of the German Consulate and excited some of the newspapers, which saw in this an indication that Stalin has turned against Hitler. The action is coupled, in some people's minds, with the reported heavy movement of Russian troops from Siberia into the western part of the USSR and with the signing of the Russo-Japanese pact. What Stalin intends to do we don't know; our own guess is that he wants to keep out of war if he possibly can, as much from fear as from discretion. Our point is that we don't believe the New York Communists know any more about Stalin's intentions than anybody else. Time and again, Russia has taken vital decisions about which the New York party members had no advance information. The famous pact with Germany was one example; the recent agreement with Japan was another. The Communists these days are a pathetic spectacle as they anxiously search the skies over the Kremlin to see whether they believe today what they believed yesterday. For demonstrating before the German Consulate they are as likely to be rebuked as praised—if Moscow bothers to do either.

Why Should Italians Rejoice?

In the tragedy that is Europe, Mussolini continues to offer a grimly comic note. His official press is in transports of joy over the German successes in Yugoslavia, Greece and (until lately) North Africa. After the foe has been decimated by the sour-faced warriors from the north, even the Italian army in Albania has managed to advance. We are not forgetting that many brave young Italian boys have been killed in battle or have died needlessly because of the military incompetence which sent men in tropical uniforms into the snow of Albanian mountains and failed to bring up the most primitive medical supplies for the wounded. We doubt whether the families of those dead boys share the jubilation of the Fascists who a few weeks ago faced the possibility of being thrown out of office for general incompetence by the enraged Italian people. Mussolini today is Hitler's slave and everybody in Italy knows it. When he has finished with more dangerous enemies, it is quite likely that the Führer intends to dispense with Il Duce. The German Nazis have long memories; they remember the brutality with which the Italians treated the German-speaking inhabitants of the former Austrian Tyrol. If Il Duce pricks his ears he cannot fail to hear the cry of "Next!"

Buying a Little Morale

Under the lease-lend bill, help is now being given to various countries which are fighting Nazi aggression. A friend of ours makes a suggestion which seems worth passing on. Why not, he says, give a little lease-lend aid to some of the refugee governments of the countries that have been overrun, such as Czecho-Slovakia, Norway and (De Gaullist) France? These governments are presumably already getting some funds from the United States as the frozen credits of their nationals here are slowly released. But such funds do not serve the purpose that would be achieved by loans or gifts of even trifling sums which could be announced to all the world as American aid to governments that have felt the Nazi steam roller. This war, to an unprecedented extent, is one of propaganda and morale. Why not buy a lot of morale at far below the market rate?

To Organization Democrats

One of the scandalous aspects of the current mood of illiberalism in Congress is that a number of those who most bitterly give voice to it are Democrats, outstanding party men. Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator, said good things to exactly the right people when he spoke at the Jackson Day dinner in New York City. Mr. McNutt is a power in Democratic Party politics. At the dinner he was talking to the Democratic organization. He reminded it of simple truths that no American in a position of responsibility dare forget. There are 8,000,000 members of labor unions in the United States; they have 15,000,000 dependents; about 40,000,000 others benefit from their success in raising labor standards. They have fought for New Deal social gains because they needed them. They need them now. They will defend democracy with zeal if their well-being is advanced under such a system. If not, not.

Social gains are not words, but facts, as a house or an old-age pension or a job on which you work like a free man is a fact. In his Jackson Day speech Mr. McNutt noted that "the relatively few strikes have not caused one-seventieth the loss in the defense program that sickness or accidents have." That one fact lights up the labor problems of the city of Bethlehem, or Dearborn, or Harlan, as with a white flare. Mr. McNutt's plain speaking deserves the country's thanks.

News Notes of a Week

Adolf Hitler was fifty-two years old and Nazis prayed to God that his existence might be spared. . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The British, who have determined that theirs is worth fighting for, saw the possibility of an invasion by Hitler's troops come nearer than at any time since last summer. Military experts said that it would probably come via Eire. . . . The London Economist pointed out that under the new tax rate, no one in Great Britain could spend more than $28,000 annually. . . . Russian and Japanese newspapers did some heavy experting in the field of political interpretation. Pravda said that the Russian-Japanese treaty was not directed toward Germany but was a blow at the United States and Great Britain. The Osaka Mainichi and the Tokyo Nichi Nichi told their readers that the United States, Britain, China, British India, Australia and the Netherlands Indies had signed a secret military and naval pact, and that Russia has demanded the right to put troops into Iran to guard the Baku oil fields.

The President told his press conference that the people of the United States were not yet aware of their country's danger. . . . By a ruling of the War Department, the whole army is now subject to overseas duty. . . . Assistant Secretary of War Lovett says that the United States has twenty secret types of planes ready for production. . . . Wendell Willkie joined a New York law firm: Willkie, Owen, Otis and Bailly. . . . The Red Cross asked 1,000 young doctors to volunteer for service in England. . . . The City Affairs Committee of New York formally requested the Little Flower to stay in the City Hall for another term. Fiorello said thank you, omitting the words yes and no.

Protect the Cargoes!

THE NEWS from the Eastern Mediterranean is bad and is likely to get worse. On April 22 the British and Greek armies were being driven back and it seemed likely that the whole Greek mainland would have to be evacuated, perhaps with something like a repetition of Dunkirk.

In Africa, the German eastward thrust was halted about at the Egyptian border, but no one could be sure how long this would be the case. The British troops used in Ethiopia were hurrying northward to help relieve the pressure on Alexandria. But there is certainly a possibility that the German pincers movement may be successful and that Suez will be lost and the whole position in the Mediterranean Basin greatly endangered. This would not mean a British defeat in the war as a whole; the Empire could go on fighting and with a good chance of final victory. But it would be a serious setback. It would make more necessary than ever maximum aid from the United States. It is doubly desirable that Americans should now look in the face the extent of their commitment and responsibility in the war.

Hitler knows that we are already at war with him, even if we do not. It is absolutely certain that at the earliest possible moment he will seek his revenge against us for what we have done up to now. That moment will come soon after Britain has been vanquished, if she is. From the standpoint of our national survival nothing could be more shortsighted than to give England some help but not enough to make certain her victory.

It is reported that President Roosevelt now proposes to send supplies to the Mediterranean area in American ships which will use the Red Sea, removing these waters from the combat zone designated by him under the neutrality law and protecting these ships in passage with the United States navy. Such protection, he says, is an old, continuing obligation on our government under existing law. Of the legal position we do not feel competent to speak; but we are quite sure that such an attitude is morally right and that if the law does not now justify this course, it should be modified at once by Congress. But the Red Sea is not the heart of the problem. It still remains true in spite of everything that the war will be won or lost in the British Isles. We are sending large amounts of materials to Great Britain by the North Atlantic; and this sea route is in deadly peril from German bombers and submarines.

The New Republic believes that the United States should immediately take whatever steps are necessary to see that our supplies reach the British people. If as a result Hitler declares war, he will only be doing a little sooner what he is sure to do later if he is not defeated in the meantime. We do not believe he will declare war; but the risk is insignificant compared with the risk—to us—of a British defeat.

In the past, we have hoped that by supplying materials America could obviate the necessity of supplying men and ships; but it is now clear that this is not possible. A comparison of the present situation with that of the First World War will show how this is true. Twenty-five years ago, England had as allies Italy, Japan and France and their navies. Today, one of these countries is an open enemy and the other two are practically in that category. In 1914 England entered the fight with 319 flotilla leaders, destroyers and torpedo boats, the types used in convoy. She entered the present conflict with 166. Since then she has obtained fifty over-age American destroyers, which are already somewhat obsolete. She has admitted the loss of thirty-six, and has undoubtedly lost a few more. The desperate character of the emergency is shown by her turning to corvettes, which have a makeshift hull, any engine the builders can get and a crew one-half or one-third the size of that on a destroyer.

Britain, with her heavy obligations in the Mediterranean and at Singapore, is sending convoys of fifty or more merchant ships across the Atlantic with only one or two destroyers, and in some cases apparently

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

none. Said Craig Thompson in a dispatch from London to The New York Times of April 22:

> Adequately escorted convoys have been delivering goods to Britain with a remarkably low degree of mortality. It is from convoys like that conducted by the Jervis Bay, where one armed merchantman was charged with the job of protecting a long line of ships, as well as the sailings of cargo vessels alone or in groups unprotected by warships, that the heavy losses come. . . . Submarines do not attack convoys when there are several speedy destroyers hovering around them. The loss of submarines . . . is too high.
>
> Neither is air attack effective under the same conditions, because the bombers will not dive low enough for accurate bombing aim when faced with an anti-aircraft barrage from warships.

Britain is short not only of ships but of men. A high British naval official tells The New Republic that if America were to provide another fifty destroyers, the British would be able to furnish personnel for only some of them. This is because a naval crew consists not merely of simple sailors, but of highly skilled technical experts. It takes years to train such men.

The problem of convoy embraces airplanes as well as ships. Britain urgently needs long-range fighters and bombers to meet the submarine and bombing attacks on the ships. If the Germans should reach Dakar and establish a base there from which to attack the South Atlantic shipping lanes, the whole problem would suddenly become very much more serious.

The bitter-end isolationists charge that the American "interventionists" are urging step after step that will bring the United States into the war. The validity of this statement depends upon what you mean by "war." In one sense, we have already been at war for years. The editors of The New Republic have at no time recommended any step that they did not believe was entirely necessary for the defense of this country. Being convinced, as they are, that an attack by a victorious Hitler would be inevitable, they think it is only common sense to stop him at the earliest possible moment. They hope this will not require war, but if it does, they believe that war now in support of Great Britain is preferable to war later and alone.

There are plenty of things about Britain that we don't like. We hope to see them bettered; we hope to see the American government bring all possible pressure to have them bettered. But our choice is not between imperfect Britain and perfection; it is between imperfect Britain and a Germany more imperfect to an indescribable degree. We demand therefore that the British and American naval authorities should consult immediately on the best means of protecting the North Atlantic, and that the United States then do its fair share of the job, no matter how serious the task may be. If we now do "too little too late" it may be the last time we ever do anything as a free and independent nation.

What the FBI Is Doing

WHAT IS the attitude of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in these tense and trying times? The New Republic, in its supplement of February 17, criticized adversely some of the recent activities of the FBI on the ground that they seemed out of place as part of an effort to defeat totalitarian methods abroad without descending to them at home. Several of our statements have been challenged by a high official of the United States government. We are not permitted to give his name or to use his exact words, but since the accuracy of our statements has been questioned, we feel that we are entitled to discuss the subject publicly.

To avoid misunderstanding, we should begin by saying that The New Republic is heartily in favor of many things the FBI is doing. We concede that it is both necessary and desirable to stop plots in this country by agents of foreign powers—plots which are designed to cripple our national-defense efforts. We recognize that not all these efforts will take the form of physical destruction of property, but may operate in more subtle ways. When we challenge activities of the FBI, we do not in the least wish to interfere with its legitimate and proper functions. We are only concerned that it not permit a repetition of that shameful spectacle of twenty years ago.

We are not being alarmist about this. During the Great War and for several years after it ended, the Department of Justice, and the FBI in particular, was a disgrace to the United States government and to every decent American citizen. It made itself the tool of black reaction, it was strongly anti-labor, its agents broke the law repeatedly and outrageously. At least one of its victims committed suicide rather than submit to the methods of FBI agents. Every honest American citizen must be concerned that we should not repeat that shameful spectacle of twenty years ago.

One statement made by The New Republic that has been challenged was that the FBI has begun "to check workers in defense industries for their employers." A sweeping denial is made. Our statement was based upon the testimony of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI, found on page 119 of the House Hearings on the Justice Department Appropriations Bill for 1941, January 5, 1940. Mr. Hoover said:

> There are also being received now—and this is going to be a problem that will give us quite some increase in volume of work—fingerprint records for many of the industrial plants in the country engaged in manufacture of supplies and equipment under contract for the army and navy. The employees of those particular plants in many instances are being fingerprinted by the industry itself, these records being transmitted to the Bureau for check to ascertain whether these individuals have been engaged either in criminal or subversive activities.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another statement by The New Republic that is challenged is that the General Intelligence Division of the FBI, which was reëstablished in September, 1939, "has been engaged in ferreting out the opinions and beliefs of American citizens, whether criminal or not." Denial has been made that there is any division of the FBI whose duties primarily concern opinions and belief, although it is admitted that the FBI preserves and indexes every complaint that is made, whether groundless or not, as well as the results of any investigations made in consequence of them. In other words, it is argued that while twenty years ago the FBI had an index of persons, today it has one of complaints.

Mr. Hoover, testifying before a subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, on November 30, 1939, said:

> In September of 1939 we found it necessary to organize a General Intelligence Division in Washington. The establishment of this division was made necessary by the President's proclamation directing that all complaints of violations of the national-defense statutes and proclamations be reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This division now has compiled extensive indices of individuals, groups and organizations engaged in these subversive activities, or any activities that are possibly detrimental to the internal security of the United States.
>
> The indexes have been arranged not only alphabetically but also geographically, so that at any time, if we should enter the conflict abroad, we would be able to go into any of these communities and identify individuals or groups who might be a source of grave danger to the security of this country. Their backgrounds and activities are known to the Bureau. These indexes will be extremely valuable in grave emergency. (Hearings on Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill for 1940, pp. 304-305.)

A little later Mr. Hoover supplemented his statement. On January 8, 1940, he told the same subcommittee:

> We have also initiated special investigation of persons reported upon as being active in any subversive activity or in movements detrimental to the internal security. In that connection, we have a general index, arranged alphabetically and geographically, available at the Bureau, so that in the event of any greater emergency coming to our country we will be able immediately to locate those various persons who may need to be the subject of further investigation by the federal authorities. (Hearings on Department of Justice Appropriations Bill for 1941, p. 153.)

These indexed persons, it will be noted, are not those violating national-defense legislation. Even if we were to go to war, these persons are not indexed to go to jail; they are indexed for "further investigation." It seems clear that the "subversive" cases or those "detrimental to the internal security" that are under the index do not even come within the ample scope of our present broad defense legislation.

Is it not evident that the duty of the FBI is to investigate crime, not vague actions loosely called "subversive" or "detrimental"—non-statutory words which can mean anything? The danger of allowing law-enforcement agencies to roam at will in the non-criminal but headline-fertile fields of the "subversive" was ably stated by Attorney General Robert H. Jackson in his speech before the Conference of United States Attorneys about a year ago. He said:

> In times of fear or hysteria, political, racial, religious, social and economic groups, often from the best of motives, cry for the scalps of individuals or groups because they do not like their views. Particularly do we need to be dispassionate and courageous in those cases which deal with so-called "subversive activities." They are dangerous to civil liberty because the prosecutor has no definite standards to determine what constitutes a "subversive activity," such as we have for murder or larceny. Activities which seem benevolent or helpful to wage earners, persons on relief or those who are disadvantaged in the struggle for existence may be regarded as "subversive" by those who have property interests that might be burdened thereby. Those who are in office are apt to regard as "subversive" the activities of any of those who would bring about a change in administration. Some of our soundest constitutional doctrines were once punished as "subversive." We must not forget that it was not so long ago that both the term "Republican" and the term "Democrat" were epithets with sinister meaning to denote persons of radical tendencies that were "subversive" of the order of things then dominant.
>
> In the enforcement of laws which protect our national integrity and existence, we should prosecute any and every *act* of violation, but only overt acts, not the expression of opinion, or activities such as the holdings of meetings, petitioning of Congress or dissemination of news or opinions. Only by extreme care can we protect the spirit as well as the letter of our civil liberties. . . . (Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, vol. 31, pp. 5-6.)

This is a fine statement, but we submit that it is widely at variance with Mr. Hoover's own admission as to what he has been and is doing, and expects to do.

Within the past few days public attention has been directed to the FBI's request for $100,000 "exclusively to investigate the employees of every department, agency and independent establishment of the federal government who are members of subversive organizations or advocate the overthrow of the federal government." The American Civil Liberties Union, fighting this proposal, points out: 1. There is no substantial evidence that any serious situation exists to be revealed by such an inquiry. The Dies Committee in three years has found none. 2. Such an inquiry would be likely to lead to intimidation, false accusations for personal or political ends, unfounded suspicions and inevitable loss of morale. 3. Under this proposal the FBI would get virtually the powers of a political police in a dictatorship. The ACLU feels that such a mandate, so

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vague as to be worthless, would leave the way open for an extension of powers that would threaten the freedom of political opinion generally. We agree with the ACLU. So, evidently, did Attorney General Jackson —a year ago.

Taxes Going Up

THE ADMINISTRATION'S DESIRE to revise the tax laws in order to add $3,500,000,000 to the revenue which may already be expected is likely to be approved in all quarters. If expenditure is to be large enough to meet the need, and is not to result in inflationary borrowing, it is obviously necessary to increase tax receipts. The fiscal program presented by Secretary Morgenthau would still leave about one-third of the budget to be met out of loans. These loans may safely rest at least in part on expansion of bank credit until the limit of the nation's productive capacity is approached, but eventually they ought to be derived from savings, and in order to achieve this objective the Treasury should not have too large a margin to finance in the securities markets.

The principal controversy will concern the nature of the taxes to be levied. Each group of taxpayers, while admitting the general necessity, will try to shift the burden to the shoulders of others. Yet sound national policy is as much concerned with the incidence of the burden as with the total amount of the receipts.

The first and most important source of revenue to be tapped is obviously the rapidly rising profits of defense industries. The "excess-profits tax" passed last year was excessively tender, because business seemed reluctant to enter defense production at all. It will yield to the Treasury only a tiny percentage of the billions that industry stands to make out of the defense program. The law is complicated and difficult to explain, but in general there are in it three glaring defects. One is that each taxpayer may choose whether to use as his reference point in the base period the absolute amount of profits or the percentage of profit earned on invested capital. The second is that no excess-profits tax need be paid on earnings not in excess of eight percent. These two provisions, taken together, will enable corporations making hugely increased profits to escape the tax entirely. Finally, the percentages of taxation are moderate, being graduated only up to 50 percent of the excess, whereas Great Britain is now taking 100 percent. Wise revision would greatly increase the yield of this tax.

Obviously the income tax may be made to yield far more than it does. There is not much room for increase of rates in the upper brackets, and increase there would not yield great revenue because the total of income in those brackets is not a large percentage of the national income. Surtax rates in the middle brackets have been boosted recently as well. But there is plenty of room for increasing the normal rate and for decreasing the exemption so as to give the tax a far wider base. Such earnest progressives as Senator La Follette have long urged tax reform of this kind, even before the national emergency.

The third class of taxes which will be considered are those which bear on the ultimate consumer (as taxes on profits and incomes do not). Sales taxes of various kinds, excise taxes, taxes on business turnover and the like are in this class. These taxes are recommended, first, because they can be made to yield a large revenue, second, because they appear to be painless—being as a rule concealed in the price—and third, because they "soak the poor" as well as the rich. Just for that reason, however, they should be scrutinized with extreme caution.

The federal government already raises a large part of its income from taxes on the consumer, and if state and local taxes be added, it will be found that in spite of income-tax increases, the indirect taxes have gained ground in recent years. Such taxes are not graduated in relation to ability to pay. If applied only to luxuries, they may be avoided by the poor, but in America almost everybody uses such "luxuries" as the movies, tobacco, gasoline and other articles against which these taxes are levied. The broader sales taxes, with their effect on prices, naturally tend to limit consumption and so are undesirable in an economy in which underconsumption is a continual evil.

In a defense economy it may eventually be necessary to limit all civilian consumption in the interest of the war services. And it may be necessary to tax the low-income receivers even more in proportion to their ability to pay than they are taxed at present, for the simple reason that the higher incomes are already taxed to the limit. But neither situation confronts us yet. And there are fairer and more effective ways of limiting the sales of those few things that are scarce enough to be rationed. Let us raise the $3,500,000,000 without invoking the last and most unjust recourse.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

Editors: BRUCE BLIVEN, MALCOLM COWLEY, GEORGE SOULE, STARK YOUNG; *Treasurer:* DANIEL MEBANE; *Assistant Editors:* NIGEL DENNIS, BYRON DEXTER, OTIS FERGUSON, ELIZABETH HULING; *Contributing Editors:* H. N. BRAILSFORD, VAN WYCK BROOKS, JULIAN HUXLEY, E. C. LINDEMAN, JONATHAN MITCHELL, REXFORD G. TUGWELL; *Advertising Manager:* E. G. WOOD

SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION, SIX DOLLARS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

EDITED AND PRODUCED UNDER UNION CONDITIONS BY CONTRACT WITH THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE GUILD, LOCAL 18, UOPWA, CIO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Scientists in Uniform: England

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT at any time to compress into a single article the contributions of science to a nation's effort. In wartime another and opposite difficulty presents itself: most of the really important work is necessarily secret.

However, there are some general reflections as well as certain concrete facts which emerge from Britain's scientific experience in this war. Let me begin with the concrete and the specific. War presents many new problems; and also many old problems either in a new guise or with new urgency. What is more, for the solution of all these new *ad-hoc* problems the resources of science can be mobilized in a much more thoroughgoing fashion than in peacetime. The national emergency is so overriding that "background" science has to be given up, and the purest of scientists find themselves attacking the most practical of problems. Sometimes, as is the nature of things, these practical problems have important theoretical consequences. In the last war the investigation of what used to be called shell-shock finally convinced the medical profession of the existence of the Unconscious. But results of that sort are apparent only after the event.

There has been a curious pendant to this during the present war. It was anticipated that heavy bombing would lead to widespread neuroses among civilians. But actually there has been very little. For instance, in December the total number of civilian cases of air-raid neurosis requiring admission to psychiatric hospitals in Britain was twenty-eight, of which twenty-five came from the London area. There was much more neurosis in the early months of the war, arising from fear of air raids, than later from actual bombing. The basic explanation appears to be psychologically simple. Soldiers suffering from conversion hysteria or other forms of shell-shock were removed from the front line to a nice quiet base hospital. But for the bombed civilian the whole country is the front line, and to be immobilized in a hospital renders him still more vulnerable. Shell-shock is an unconscious escape mechanism. If the unconscious knows there is no escape, it does not contrive the mechanism. In so far as there is an escape, it is provided by deep shelters and remote parts of the country, and doubtless these harbor a high proportion of potential neurotics. There is, however, the additional difference, which will be very important with certain temperaments, that the soldier is called upon to kill, in addition to taking the risk of being killed.

One concrete problem with certain peculiar features is that of the magnetic mine. As everyone now knows, after one of these had been dismantled with great gallantry by a naval officer, British scientists set to and within a few weeks devised a complete solution, in the shape of the degaussing of iron ships. There is a certain amount of evidence that the Germans thought that there was no easy answer to the magnetic mine; yet from the standpoint of theoretical physics, it was a simple problem. Had the German physicists slipped up? Had the purges of German science left them with technicians rather than scientists to deal with this problem? It will be interesting to find out, after the war.

Wholesale air-bombing is a new feature of war, the effects of which have been thoroughly studied for the first time since last August. Since the forces involved are much bigger than any that can be studied in the laboratory, the study of the natural (or unnatural) experiment of air bombing has revealed a good many new facts and principles about the strength of materials, old and new; while the details are still secret, it can be said that this is likely to be valuable for building science in general, and in particular for the design of buildings intended to resist earthquakes.

Another result of aerial bombardment is the great attention paid to camouflage. After a disappointing start and much delay, camouflage in Britain is now being executed with the aid of the best scientific knowledge; physicists, chemists, psychologists, zoölogists, even botanists are contributing their share. Until recently, camouflage has been regarded as something which is put on to a building after it has been erected. But recently the logical step has been taken of calling in the camouflage experts to help in the original design. The results are said to be extremely effective.

Certain general consequences are likely to follow. Designing buildings for concealment means designing them as part of the landscape; and this means paying the most detailed attention to the lay of the land, instead of disregarding it with the consummate human arrogance that distinguishes American town layouts even more than British. Again, effective camouflage means thinking in integral terms, of the building as a whole and in its total relations with the environment; and this again is likely to have an effect on architecture and town planning.

Work on explosives is naturally intensive but also very secret.

Blast effects on human beings are among the unpleasant novelties to be studied. The Spanish war first aroused suspicions that here was a new type of injury. Now we know that blast is due to the wave of intense compression of air, produced by an exploding bomb and traveling outward in advance of the wave of rarefaction. The compression wave has interesting results. For instance, it causes the velocity of sound in the air which it compresses to increase. Velocities up to twenty times that in normal air may occur, but the effect

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

diminishes quickly with distance. This pressure wave is capable of inflicting certain peculiar types of damage, especially on the lungs. The lungs may be bruised beyond repair without any symptoms appearing on the surface of the body. The symptoms are those of a non-infective pneumonia. This knowledge has made more rational treatment possible; and may be used later as a means for studying the mechanical aspects of what is medically called "shock" in quantitative terms. A result of some general interest is that it has proved impossible to get very far in understanding blast cases by the usual method of merely studying them when they reach hospital. It has proved necessary to investigate the precise conditions in which the damage occurred, so as to distinguish between pure blast (pressure) effects, suction effects, and secondary effects due to being knocked down or being hit by falling bricks, etc. Medicine here has had to become a field study.

The possible necessity for blood transfusion on a very large scale has led to great improvements, both in regard to storage in large "blood pools" and to administration. For certain types of cases, blood plasma can now be desiccated and stored dry, being made up with a special solution before administration. Here again, the work is leading to valuable new ideas on the measuring and treatment of shock.

New methods of treating burns have now been worked out, which quite supersede the old. As regards ordinary wounds, the method of just leaving them encased in plaster of Paris, first tried in the Spanish war, has proved surprisingly successful; and complications due to wound infection have been much reduced by the use of the new sulfanilamide drugs, not only by mouth, but dusted over the wound surface. Another phenomenon of this war is the prevalence of a new type of wound, caused not by bullets or large shell fragments, but by small splinters penetrating at great velocity. These cause disproportionate and unexpected types of damage to human tissues.

The methods and ideas worked out by physiologists and experimental embryologists in the study of tissue culture and the mechanics of animal development are now proving valuable in this field. Tissue cultures are being used to study substances, such as extracts of the tissue of embryos, which promote rapid wound-healing, and new methods of nerve-grafting are being used to restore the use of organs whose nerve-supply has been cut.

Perhaps the most important applications of science are in the field of nutrition. In the last war, vitamins had only just been discovered. It was not till well into the last decade that our knowledge of them and of other protective substances like mineral salts became at all comprehensive. In a previous article I spoke of the fortifying of bread and margarine with vitamins and minerals, and of the large-scale provision of free or cheap milk.

The widespread use of communal feeding is also being employed to provide a more adequate diet. And so many people are now talking of some scheme of family allowances in kind that their introduction cannot well be long delayed. The most effective method would seem to be to issue coupons to mothers entitling them to cheap or free issues of protective foods like milk, carrots or cheese (and possibly vitamin tablets) for each child. If this does happen, we can be sure we shall never go back to the old bad ways, and we shall have laid the main foundation for a healthy Britain.

But there are other fields in which science is hammering away at food problems. The need for accumulating reserves of food led to the establishment of huge stocks of grain and other storable products; these in turn attracted hordes of pests, such as grain-beetles and rats; and the damage caused by the pests has led to much research on methods of countering them. The most interesting work has been based on a careful study of their life history, habits and behavior, so as to detect the weak spot in their biological armor. The methods of that important branch of biology—ecology—are likely to be of permanent benefit.

Again, experiments are being conducted to see whether, by administration of this or that ductless-gland extract, food-producing animals can be made to grow faster, mature earlier, produce twins instead of single young, breed twice a year instead of only once. So far, the work is still in the experimental stage.

Other researches are even more fundamental. They are being directed to making the vegetable riches of the earth directly available to human stomachs, instead of having them go through the intermediate stomachs of pigs or sheep or cattle, with great wastage in the process. Here again the results have not yet been applied in practice, but it seems fairly certain that within a short time they will be ripe for application. The newspapers have already been making jokes about Nebuchadnezzar. However, what is certain is that we shall not be asked to emulate either the Babylonian king or the domestic cow by eating grass, but that the new process will provide us with the most nutritious part of grass or other green-stuff in a form which is available to our digestive apparatus. Science is accordingly concentrating first on breaking down the cellulose cell-walls, and then on extracting the plant proteins (comparable in food value with lean meat or cheese) in concentrated form. It is possible that one day the proper utilization of this greenery will render much of traditional agriculture out of date, and make unnecessary a large proportion of the transport of foodstuffs from one region of the world to another.

The need for efficient food production is gradually introducing scientific methods into the business of seed production, which has hitherto been distinctly inefficient because the profit motives have overridden the possibilities of improvement in quality.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is one field in which science does not seem to be used to the full. A campaign for plowing up and improving huge areas of the land has been embarked upon, and the decisions as to what land shall be plowed up, what used for dairy cattle, etc., are left to local committees consisting largely of local farmers. This is a democratic and valuable system; but it could have been more valuable without becoming less democratic if the scientific agricultural and soil experts of the region had been represented on the committees.

In another field, the established findings of science were temporarily neglected with grave results. It had been proved beyond a shadow of doubt in the last war that increasing hours of work beyond a certain limit led not to an increase but to an absolute decrease in output. In June of 1940, however, these findings were forgotten, and much too long hours were introduced. The evil results were soon apparent, however, and after a few months the matter was put right.

There is one general point of considerable interest. The relation of science to the national effort is entering on a new phase in this war. During the last war, science was already essential. But it was more or less confined to the application of well established branches, such as straightforward chemistry or the applied classical physics we call engineering. In this war, however, success in some of the most vital fields is coming to depend on the most modern branches of research, such as last-word electronic physics and wave mechanics. This is true of methods of airplane detection, for instance; while the design of planes themselves is calling for ever greater refinement of pure aerodynamic theory. To put it in another way, scientists are becoming essential not merely for their application of old knowledge to war problems, but for working out radically new scientific and technical methods.

As a consequence of this greater demand on science, in many fields a scarcity of scientists is beginning to manifest itself. In peacetime we were spending only about one-tenth of one percent of our national income on scientific research, as against about six-tenths of one percent in the USA, and eight-tenths in the USSR. Today we are paying for that neglect. If the implications of that fact ever penetrate the skulls of those in authority, if they come to realize that the only agency for obtaining the solution of technical problems is science, then this war will have brought about not only the defeat of evil, but some permanent good.

There is another aspect of science in wartime: its organization and its relation to governmental and other public agencies. Under this head I would include the expansion of the social sciences, and the application of scientific methods and scientific management in government itself and in administration generally. But the subject is so large as to demand treatment in a separate article.

JULIAN HUXLEY

Washington's Stepchild: The Refugee

THIS COUNTRY is supposedly committed to all-out aid to another democracy, Great Britain, to be given in a democratic way. But there will be a violent contradiction between what we preach and what we practise as long as official circles in Washington continue to brush aside efforts to solve the refugee problem, calling them "mere humanitarianism" or "just relief work," something to be admired in principle and then dismissed as "inopportune." In reality, solving the refugee problem is an essential part of the war effort, especially since Germany is now fighting us by means of the "war of refugees."

While subordinate official Washington is blind, partly through ignorance and partly through deliberate intention, President Roosevelt sees the problem clearly. As long ago as 1938, when he called thirty-three nations into conference with the United States to meet the challenge of Germany's ruthless use of the lives of refugees in her war plans, he recognized that this is a political problem, that it must be solved by governments working in collaboration and that it is a vital part of the democracies' defense against Nazi aggression.

On the positive side, the organized resettlement of refugees from the British Isles in the Western Hemisphere is chapter and verse of our aid to the democracies. England, heavily burdened with the job of feeding her own people, is being forced to care for tens of thousands of refugees from the Continent many of whom are of little help—often the reverse—in her war effort. The United States, through the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, is pledged to assist England in resettling these people. But Washington officialdom refuses to do its part and will continue to refuse unless it can somehow be jolted from its lethargy.

About 30,000 people are interned in England at the present time, and approximately 89,000 refugees are at liberty. Following the invasion of the Low Countries and France, 25,000 civilians, in round numbers, reached England—of these, there were 15,000 Belgians, 2,400 Dutch, 2,550 French, 2,800 Poles and smaller groups of other nationalities. Of those at liberty, there are at present around 18,000 who are billeted by Great Britain through local authorities, mostly in or near London. The government cares for these people as it does for its own needy subjects.

A majority of the refugees are proved opponents of the Nazi regime. Speakers during the debate in Parliament in August, 1940, emphasized that while there

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were some doubtful cases, a majority were well known to the British to be innocent victims of Nazi oppression. Admittedly, it was necessary to intern persons about whom there was doubt, but there were many thousands whose sympathy with and loyalty to the allied cause were certain.

The British are worried about these people. They wish to spare innocent victims the mental and physical suffering of internment camps. Although the majority cannot be used in the war effort, they must be clothed and fed and their morale maintained. The most satisfactory solution is resettlement in the New World. To this our government is pledged to help; it cannot with honor violate that pledge.

In October, 1939, we told the British and the representatives of the other governments fighting in defense of liberty and democracy that we would help them with their burden. We did so at the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee whom President Roosevelt invited to Washington to confer on refugee problems, men who crossed the ocean to do this at considerable personal risk. But things in Washington go by fits and starts. In March, 1941, aid for refugees is at a discount and, in consequence, our good intentions of 1939 seem lost in a maze of bureaucracy, ill will and red tape.

Long before that meeting, in 1938, the representatives of thirty-three governments met at Evian to decide what could be done about refugees. They did so on the President's call because of the German government's pressure on elements in its population of which it wished to rid itself—mainly Jews, but some Catholics, Protestants, Liberals and Conservatives as well. The representatives at Evian decided that this appalling problem could not be solved quickly, and accordingly constituted themselves a Committee of the Whole (the Intergovernmental Committee) to attack it from two angles. First, they would seek to persuade the German government to introduce some order into the existing chaos and at least allow refugees to take with them some part of their goods and wealth. Second, they would explore the world for places in which refugees might be resettled by organized projects, in addition to those who would go singly or in small groups to countries which still held their doors ajar.

Throughout the remainder of 1938 and through 1939 until the outbreak of war, representatives of the Intergovernmental Committee worked on the problem. They were, successively, George Rublee, who was appointed by the President for the purpose, Robert Pell of the State Department, and Sir Herbert Emerson, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who carried on when our government withdrew its representatives. They sought to get Germany to agree that refugees should be transported from the Reich in an orderly fashion over a period of five years, helped financially in part from emigrant wealth. The outbreak of the war of course cut these efforts short. There was no more thought of helping Germany with emigration, and the Intergovernmental Committee turned its full attention to resettlement, particularly in the Western Hemisphere.

There were many projects: one in British Guiana; another in the Philippines; and others were discussed for Ecuador, British East Africa and parts of the French and Dutch colonial empires. One government alone, however, came forward with a tangible and concrete proposal which could be implemented and which offered relief to Britain and her allies through organized resettlement. This was the Dominican Republic, first of the American governments to accept President Roosevelt's invitation to confer at Evian, first to offer land for settlement, the only one so far to enter into a formal contract under the Intergovernmental Committee for resettlement, and the only one which has welcomed to its shores refugees for settlement in an American-financed project.

At the meeting in October, 1939, President Roosevelt was able to announce not only the offer of the Dominican Republic but also that a group of Americans, headed by Mr. James N. Rosenberg and Dr. Joseph A. Rosen of New York, would help to organize and finance the project. Mr. Rosenberg and his associates incorporated in November, 1939, opened offices in the Dominican Republic and New York and accepted from Generalissimo Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina the offer of twenty-six thousand acres on the north shore of the Republic as a place of settlement.

In January, 1941, the Dominican Republic invited the member governments of the Intergovernmental Committee to attend a meeting at Ciudad Trujillo to see what could be accomplished by resettlement in subtropical countries. The representatives of fifteen governments attended this meeting and were able to report home that the skeptics who say that refugees from Europe cannot be placed successfully on the land are wrong. They saw with their own eyes that European refugees can establish themselves on the land and prosper. They were able, too, to report that the settlement of refugees is a material advantage to the country offering hospitality.

This example of what can be done in a positive sense to help in the solution of the refugee problem must be multiplied many times if the effort is to be completely successful. The stimulus must be provided, in 1941 as in 1938, by the governments coöperating under the Intergovernmental Committee. President Roosevelt, addressing the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee in October, 1939, told what should be done. He said that the governments had been working on too small a scale, that they had failed to apply modern engineering methods to their task, and that the world as a whole was confronted with a new problem involving an infinitely larger number of people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who will need care when the war is over. He said that the problem involves no one racial group, no one religious faith, but is a task for all groups and all faiths.

The President concluded by saying that the outbreak of the war meant two things: First, the current work must not be abandoned, but redirected. "We have with us," he said, "the problem of helping those individuals and families who are at this moment in countries of refuge and who for the sake of the world and themselves can best be placed in permanent domiciles during the actual course of the war without confusing their lot with the lot of those who in increasing numbers will suffer as a result of the war itself."

Second—and an equally great task—we must start immediately to survey and study scientifically the staggering geographic and economic problems of resettling several million people.

This was at the end of 1939. Since then a small group of determined men, within and without the government, have struggled against great odds, in an atmosphere of opposition and suspicion and with a minimum of support from the official makers of our foreign policies, to give effect to the President's program. The refugee effort has been at best a stepchild in Washington, to be beaten and buffeted, and at worst a football for anti-Semitism and for petty bureaucrats, including those who take delight in sabotaging the President's program just because it is his.

As this is written, there is even a move afoot to discontinue the Intergovernmental Committee, which has provided the sole stimulus for official effort in behalf of the refugees. Its office in Washington has already been virtually closed and it is questionable whether it will be provided with the small sum necessary to maintain what is left of it through the next year.

The time has come when our government, particularly those branches of it which have to do with our foreign policy, must fish or cut bait. Either it must keep its faith with the democracies, which have been promised help through relief of their refugee burden, or it must frankly admit that nothing will be done, that the assurances of 1939 were empty words, that, for all we care, England and her allies can keep their refugees, feed and clothe them and get along as best they can without us. To be sure, we would keep the mechanism of our quotas turning, occasionally opening our doors to one or two refugees from England if transportation permits. But the larger effort—we should have to admit that it is too much for us.

The refugee problem not only means positive help for Britain but defense against Germany's "war by refugees." This phase of the general war is an essential part of Hitler's coldly calculated strategy to confuse his opponents. It is brutal exploitation of human misery in order to add to the burdens of his opponents at a time when he is about to attack them with his armed forces. This wickedly clever German strategy has a double objective: First, to dump scared, destitute human beings in great numbers across frontiers or the ocean. This taxes the already overburdened facilities of his opponents, creates chaos and, above all, stimulates dissension. Second, to arouse by this act, in the camp of Hitler's enemies, racial and religious hatreds, petty persecutions which rapidly grow into major persecutions, bribery and corruption. Hitler, through his agents, works both sides. Not only does he dump the refugees where their sudden arrival creates a maximum of confusion, but his agents, and their unsuspecting victims, begin to whisper immediately that the refugees are probably secret Nazi sympathizers, that they undoubtedly are working underground for Germany, that they have not forgotten their Fatherland, that in short they and not the real Nazi agents are the peril. It is very clever, this propaganda. It reaches high places in many governments including our own, places where the wish is father to the thought, and where the seeds of anti-Semitism and anti-liberalism are already sprouting.

Our government cannot leave the German challenge unanswered. If our democracy and humanitarianism are more than words, we must meet the German threat of "war by refugees"—and there are ships with such refugees now on the seas destined for American ports—by a program of organized resettlement and orderly migration. Migration there will be. The choice is between orderly, organized resettlement and Hitler's migration, of which he gave a foretaste to the world when all through 1937 and 1938 he used force to drive thousands of people across the various Reich frontiers by night. Today there are not so many frontiers which the Gestapo can use. Refugees can be driven to unoccupied France. They can be, and are being, sent through in sealed trains to Spain and Portugal. They can be bayoneted into Soviet Russia. But there is evidence to show that the Gestapo has a new objective—the Western Hemisphere, no less. Illegal visas may be expected, forged by the German secret police, "permitting" people to enter various of the Americas. Ships will put to sea with human cargoes destined to seek entrance to American ports, and we shall have a repetition of such incidents as that of the St. Louis, which, with 900 people aboard, drifted from port to port in Central and South America in the spring of 1939, or of those leaky and overcrowded ships which finally reached the shores of Palestine.

This country *must* have a refugee policy. Today, it has next to none. "Refugee" in Washington today means "alien" to the bureaucrat, "secret agent" to the military man. For the sake of all we mean when we talk about defending democracy, the refugee should be clothed with human dignity once more, and the problem of his resettlement regarded in true perspective as one of the fundamental problems of democracy—to be solved, not dodged.

ALFRED WAGG, 3rd.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Preparedness for Peace

When peace comes, it will bring in its train problems of a character that this nation has never confronted. There are increasing signs that the President, some of his main lieutenants and various agencies of the government are well aware of the danger that an economic debacle might be the first fruit of peace, and are determined to prevent it.

There need be no doubt about the reality of the dangers. The current appropriations and authorizations for defense purposes alone, through June 30, 1942, are estimated by Director of the Budget Harold Smith at $28,460,000,000. The increase of our national spending by this amount devoted to defense involves many emergency demands on our economy. But likewise it is leading to full employment, a greatly expanding national income and increasing satisfactions for the American people.

When this emergency ends, defense spending will quickly cease. Of course the government will need to spend large sums to liquidate damages arising from canceled contracts, etc. But employment will toboggan, payrolls will shrivel, the national income will drop by at least 75 percent of the amount of defense spending during the twelve months preceding the end of hostilities. Peace will promptly reëstablish an unemployed army of about ten millions, not including farm workers unneeded in agriculture. The national income will drop by at least $15,000,000,000 and the whole price and credit structure will be in fearful jeopardy. Regardless of the war outcome, peace has cataclysmic perils of its own.

There is no knowledge and hardly an informed guess as to when peace will come. In view of the increasing vigor of Britain's military effort and our growing aid to her, it seems probable that the war will be a long one. Yet this is not necessarily the case. In the First World War, Russia was at her peak of effectiveness late in 1916; four months later her disintegration had taken place. Similarly sudden was Germany's breakdown of morale in the spring and summer of 1918. While it is probable that the present struggle will end only when the economic exhaustion of one or the other groups saps its will to war, there remains the possibility that peace may come suddenly, within three months or six months or a year. It is imperative that in this time of war we prepare for peace.

There are multiplying signs of planning by various agencies of the government to care for these hazards. And this is not a minute too soon, for there should be moving forward, at high speed, an actively backed, well coördinated minor activity operating parallel to the major activity of defense. Such a minor program today will become a major one when war gives way to peace. If promptly and well started, it would safeguard our post-war structure.

To be effective, a plan for peace should embrace these elements:

1. Its aim must be to set men to work, and to make available funds for expanding employment and for construction tasks, which will amount to at least 75 percent as much money as the defense program spent in the year preceding the coming of peace. Unless it be planned upon so emphatic a scale, it would be a little more than a thin whistle in the cyclone.

2. The program should emphasize spending for effective capital investment rather than spending for spending's sake. The tasks to which men and money are put should result in increasing the national estate by new and needed structures for the functioning of our society. For example, we should have a program for rehousing America, another for soil conservation on a huge scale and then one for rehabilitating the railroads' dated car and motive-power supply, and so on through the entire economic catalogue.

3. The program for safeguarding the peace needs to be one which we can begin to put into action not less than ninety days after the defense situation ends. Even that long a delay, which is probably the shortest possible, has elements of danger. A longer wait would have the program start when the national economy had already begun speeding down hill so fast that checking it would be immensely difficult.

4. Such a peace-economy program involves the discovery of areas of need, the making of general programs for these needs, then the technical job of precise plan, blueprint and specification. Labor quantities must be estimated, materials must be figured in detail, transportation must be carefully worked out. It must be a plan that is complete in its actual details of precise application.

The President will have the prime duties and responsibilities in executing any program for winning the peace. The executive establishment should handle the assembly, analysis and synthesis of relevant data, plan the steps to be taken and carry them out. There are a large number of executive agencies which have the knowledge, the equipment and the staff to perform important planning tasks. For example, the Department of Agriculture is well advanced with an admirably conceived and detailed soil-conservation program of a major type. But there does not exist a single unit which can coördinate and direct the total job. A new, specifically designed agency is needed. There exists in law a power of the executive which can be used for this job. The Office of Emergency Management, established under Reorganization Plan Number

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One, was purposely left formless and unfixed in structure. Indeed, this office seems to have been particularly created for future needs of the Chief Executive. It affords him power to set up, without added congressional enactment, whatever new specific agency seems needed for a particular emergency.

Such a new agency, concerned with tomorrow's problem more than today's, must command respect and attention from the heads of existing agencies, committed though these be to tasks immediately at hand. The selection of the person to be the head of the new office would probably determine its success or failure.

The first task of such an agency would be to make a survey of existing administrative establishments, to ascertain which will continue after peace; which involve the employment of people in physical construction or socially useful activities; what ideas or plans such departments now have for carrying out programs of this type; and whether their staffs and structures are so arranged that they could give immediate attention to them.

Forehandedness will be a bulwark of protection against the hunger and heartbreak that otherwise will come.

GEORGE FORT MILTON

Painters and Painting

Allston, so far as I know, never tried to paint, nor did he ever attempt to write about painting. But he had many friends who were painters. He told me that, as a boy, before he became interested in books and writing, pictures were his first enthusiasm, and that, during a winter in Dresden, when he was twelve, he went to the Zwinger every day, for five or six months, and spent the morning there. Thirty years later, he could close his eyes and see almost every picture on almost every one of the walls. He had gone through the galleries in Italy with a drawing-pad in his hand, and I found among his papers a niggling little pencil-sketch he had made of a Fra Angelico Crucifixion. The second composition he remembered writing, when he was about thirteen, was a paper on Paolo Uccello; and later he caught lead-poisoning from sleeping among the wet canvases of a young Polish painter whom he had known in Paris. ("Whatever became," he asks, "of Karol Ferencz-Winzer? If I were properly posted, I should probably find he was famous.") One of his earliest memories was of an afternoon in London when he was taken to Watts's studio. Watts, at that time, had a great name—he might have been described as the Tennyson of painting. Allston recalled the old man, with his long white beard, wearing the skull-cap that appeared in his portrait, standing in a corner of the room, beside one of his pictures—was it not the "Paolo and Francesca"?—discoursing about it very sweetly.

Many years later, at Petitpas', the French *table d'hôte* in Twenty-ninth Street, where John Butler Yeats lived and died, he dined every evening for months at a time. There he saw much of Sloan, Henri and Bellows. The Prendergast brothers and Glackens also came there. Yeats, who painted an excellent portrait of him, abounded in wit and anecdote, and Allston was always quoting Yeats, as everyone did who knew him. Speaking of Watts, the old man said, "Watts, ah yes. His literature was bad"—which seemed to hit the nail on the head. Who could forget his words on idleness?—"that idleness which is so diligent, idleness, the teeming mother of the arts." The "sacred duty of idleness," Allston said, was Yeats's special message to the harried and hurried Americans. It reminded him of Thoreau's saying, "Nothing can be more useful to a man than a determination not to be hurried." How tenderly Yeats smiled over the phrase, in one of Darwin's letters, "a nice soft woman on a sofa"! How benignly he lingered over the words, "The Emmett cradle is never empty"! He had the wisdom of the heart, so rare in New York, along with the other wisdoms, if such exist. Speaking of American art and letters, he said that exacting criticism was what they needed. He explained this in some such words as these: "Criticism should be exacting, as a mother is about her daughter's party-gown. She never dreams of comparing her girl with the girl over the way; it is understood that no other woman's daughter is to be thought of with her own. But, as the girl turns this way or that, so that her frock may have the last inspection, the mother's eye is severe as no other is, watching for any infelicity in the hang of the dress and any possible way of improving it by the change of a bow or a ribbon. So it is the kindest critic that is the hardest to please."

Allston said that Yeats was the greatest teacher he had known. He was also the most amusing. Once Allston had spoken of De Quincey, whom he adored, and Yeats began to imagine what the ladies of Manchester said about this refractory boy who had run away to London: "De Quincey! What is he! A waif and a stray. And to think that his mother moved in the best county society and had her feet planted on the Rock of Ages!" Yeats told many stories about George Moore, whom he had known for many years in Dublin. This was the Moore who, as Susan Mitchell said, did not kiss and tell but told and did not kiss. He would say, if you met him in the street, that he was on his way to buy his housekeeper a smarter pair of corsets. He would say that, at an evening party, he could go into the cloakroom and find any lady's cloak at once.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He could pick it out by the smell. He told Yeats how he had shocked his pious old-maid cousins, with whom he was dining. When one of them asked, "George, why have you never married?" he replied, "Because, dear Mary, I prefer adultery." Yeats always spoke of Moore as "the elderly old blackguard in Ely Place."

At Petitpas', in the room under Yeats's, another painter lived, Mr. Perry, the oldest living Academician. He too had a long white beard, like Yeats, Watts and Titian, and he also wore a black silk skull-cap. Indeed, he was so old, almost ninety, that he had been the American consul at Venice ten years before the Civil War. He was one of Howells' predecessors there. His room on the second floor was stacked and hung with his paintings, tight, photographic story-pictures, "The First Vaccination," and the like. Allston sometimes joined them at lunch, for he also lived for a while at Petitpas', and the two old painters were the only lodgers who took their midday meals in the house. They faced each other most unwillingly, for Perry was deaf and a bore, in Yeats's opinion, while Perry thought Yeats, who glowered at him, a scandalous and unprofitable idler. Perry droned along through the meal, while Yeats groaned in his beard and, from time to time, gave Allston a mischievous glance. For he loved mischief "for its own dear sake," as he once remarked apropos of the Irish. But Perry also had his anecdotes. Once, in some faraway past, he had spent a summer with Winslow Homer. They had occupied a two-room cabin on one of the Long Island ocean beaches. They slept in one room and lived on oysters, and threw the shells into the other room. The shells formed a pyramid and gradually slid off into the corners until, by the end of the summer, they choked the room.

Allston, as I have said, never wrote about painters and painting. His friend Walter Pach, who did so write, explained his attitude for him. Walter Pach, who wrote about painters, said, in regard to actors and singers, Sarah Bernhardt, Yvette Guilbert and others, "I saw them only across the footlights, and it is for others to tell about them." Allston felt that he saw painters only across the footlights, but he was always drawn to them. He says, for instance:

> I like painters. They are just like writers, without the nonsense. Of course, they have their own nonsense, but I don't have to bother about that.
>
> Why do artists of every kind gravitate to painters? It is because they are apt to be simple and happy. As Virgil Thomson says, in "The State of Music," "The Seeing Eye has no opinions," and "The painter's whole morality consists in keeping his brushes clean and getting up in the morning." Therefore painters are "a pleasant lot, cheerful and healthy." It is natural that the rest of us, writers, musicians and what not, who are so often morbid, are drawn to painters.

He was evidently pleased and flattered when he was taken for a painter. I find this note, for instance:

> The girl in charge of the picture-gallery asked me for a cigarette. Then she said, "You're an artist, aren't you?"—"No," said I. "What made you think so?"—"Because you can't make your hair behave."

Allston said once that he knew four men without guile, and all these men were painters. "For the purest virgin crystalline goodness," he wrote in one of his letters, "give me a painter." Elsewhere he says, "I have tried several times to provoke K. A. into saying something nasty about at least one person. But it never worked."

He liked to repeat what the grocer said in a village, much frequented by painters, where he sometimes spent a summer. This grocer often let his bills run, even to the extent of a thousand dollars, to help some poor devil of an artist, and he had never had a bad debt. Some time, five or ten years later, from Mexico or Bali or wherever, back would come the check. The poor devil had had a run of luck. Yet he seems to have felt that there were other kinds of painters. On one of the fly-leaves of his Vasari, I find the following notes:

> Those artists with defeated eyes and the manners of courtiers and sycophants whom one sees in fashionable circles, hovering about the lamp of the pocketbook.
>
> Why do I wish to avoid such men as X, who abound among artists and writers? They are the men with a foot in each sphere, the sphere of the mind and the sphere of the mundane. They have a superstitious regard for those who have both feet in the sphere of the mind, after which they hanker, but, if they had to make a choice, if they had to plant both feet on one side of the line, they would take the side of the mundane, not with the integrity of worldly people, but because they lack the strength for the other side.
>
> This tormented double-mindedness subtly poisons the air about them. I know how to deal with the frankly worldly, but the effort to contribute to the self-respect of people who feel they have lapsed from the other world and lack the will to recover it, or even seek it, is not good for anyone. Healthy people are those who make clear decisions. The half-artists, soft within, affect me like stretches of marshland. You never know, in their company, where to place your foot, for fear of hurting their feelings, and you begin to doubt your own ground. They *give* at every point, and, meeting no resistance, your muscles become an illusion to yourself. It does not do to linger after nightfall in swamps of this kind. One is sure to catch malaria.
>
> Apropos of luxurious studios, I like the account of the studio of Puvis de Chavannes. A visitor who entered it, expecting to be impressed in the usual way, found the walls bare except for a single sketch pinned up in a corner.
>
> Luxurious studios are all of a piece with those beautiful islands to which so many artists resort, hoping to find inspiration. They are usually like Teneriffe in the Canaries, where the old English lady who lived there said to Webb Waldron, "No one was ever known to have an idea on this island."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One reason why Allston never wrote on art was that there was so much "literature" in it. As a writer, he looked, in painting, for something different from the trade he followed, and, in fact, as different as possible. It was for sense-impressions that he turned to painting, and he wished to see it through his senses. But the artists were so afraid he would miss the meaning that they would not leave him alone. They were always explaining why they had no "literature," and the literature that had grown about the subject, not to speak of the literature the artists uttered in explaining their hatred of literature, was much too much for Allston. He felt that he at least should hold his peace. It follows that his notes on painters are mere whims and trifles. Most of them are anecdotes, ungarnished; and an esthetician would find them paltry. It may have been Vasari who suggested to Allston the notion of writing these anecdotes down, for I find numbers in his journals. But I will spare the reader these, adding only two notes about Albert Ryder:

I like Ryder's saying, after he had been working for eighteen years on a landscape, "The sky is getting interesting."

We put on a good show for foreigners, with our skyscrapers, hold-ups, cocktail parties, etc. But these, like the display in the Tower of London, are only our paste crown jewels. Our real crown jewels never appear, for we have no coronation times. We keep them only for the tribe. They say that New York, for instance, has no secrets, but I think, if I wished to do so, I could show them a few. There is the secret, for one, behind the name of the Hotel Albert in University Place. I always encouraged people to think that this was named for Prince Albert, or, during the First World War years, for the King of the Belgians. What the tribe knows is that "Albert" was Albert Ryder, our tribal painter. The hotel was owned by his brother, who named it after the old man. But this is not to be told in Gath, and I should not be telling it now if the secret had not leaked out through faulty gas pipes.

Let me conclude with one anecdote, which will do no harm. "Who told me," Allston asks, "about the barber in Quebec? My friend was painting in a field, just outside a village on the Saint Lawrence, when he noticed an odd little Frenchman, with a dandified air, dressed in a long shabby swallow-tail coat, approaching him across the field. The little man took off his hat and introduced himself as a brother artist. His name was Samuel de Champlain, and he was a descendant of the explorer, as well as the barber of the neighboring hamlet. He invited my friend to a *soirée* at his house, saying he would like to show him his latest picture, the most ambitious he had ever done. My friend, who was curious, called and saw the picture. It was a life-sized whale, frescoed on the ceiling of the parlor. As the ceiling was not large enough, he had carried his design through the window and up the wall of the house, so that the tail of the whale flapped over the roof."

VAN WYCK BROOKS

This is the fifth article in the series, "Opinions of Oliver Allston." – THE EDITORS

Meeting the Blitz on Labor

WITH THE ENDING of the Ford strike, the successful mediation of the Allis-Chalmers strike and the steel agreement, we have come to the end of a phase of the problem of labor-management relations in the defense industries. Although at the present writing there is still difficulty over the soft-coal agreement on the part of the Southern mine-operators, and some talk of trouble to come in General Motors, the great tension has, at least for the time, been relieved. But if there is a relative degree of quiet in the public excitement over strikes, it is the lull between two storms. For there can be little doubt that the campaign that has been waged against labor for months is not over, and that the near future will see a revival of it in a somewhat new form.

Up to now that campaign has been a three-pronged affair. One prong has been the stubborn resistance of some of the corporate industrialists, who seem to learn nothing and forget nothing, to all demands for collective bargaining and efforts at union organization. The second has been the attack on labor in Congress on the ground of the defense emergency, by a group of congressional primitives headed by Representatives Sumners, Ford and Hobbs, who have gone so far as to advocate the electric chair for strikers. The third has been the campaign in the press and in the newsreels, to stir public indignation against the interruption of the defense effort. All three attacks have been correlated with the skill of a Nazi General Staff planning a diplomatic, economic and military blitz.

It is still too early to say the attack has failed. All one can say is that it has not yet had the desired results. Why? One reason is that the President, despite the incitement of the reactionaries in Congress, has on the whole kept his head and refused to join the hysteria. Another reason is that the union leaders, for all their militancy and determination in defense of their rights, have also kept their heads pretty well. The widely advertised violence has not materialized. The labor movement is now reaping the fruits of its great organizing campaign of 1936 and 1937. It has an initial strength, a skill in organization and maneuver, a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sense of confidence and a quiet morale which have been of the greatest importance. The union leaders have made it clear that they are striking not against defense but against that very corporate tyranny which is the real enemy of democracy everywhere; and they have been willing in many instances to allow workers to remain on the job on actual defense contracts. But most important is the fact that even the usually gullible newspaper reader has begun to understand that many crimes can be committed in the name of defense; and that the American common man cannot defend democracy unless at the same time he has some democracy to defend.

And yet, among many of the lower-middle-class groups, as well as in the higher income brackets, the press campaign has taken its toll. All of us have had the experience of encountering people who, because there have been a few jurisdictional strikes in the building-trades industries, believe that all strikes are over jurisdictional squabbles. Or people who, because in a few instances there have been Communists in the unions, argue that the defense strikes are Communist plots. Or people who point to the fall of France and ascribe it to labor troubles, and argue a similar doom for us unless we crack down on unions. Or people who argue that while boys are giving up jobs to be drafted and get $21 a month, the workers are not content unless they get wage increases.

The arguments are familiar. One can answer them in detail to the point of exhaustion: that only a few strikes are jurisdictional, and none of the important ones; that men like Philip Murray, R. J. Thomas, Walter Reuther not only are not Communists, but have consistently been fought by the Communists; that the fall of France was due far more to the blindness of industrialists who wanted to smash labor at any cost than it was to any complacence toward labor; that if the draftee's pay is allowed to depress wages of workers outside the army, the whole nation will become one vast draft camp.

And yet the attempt to give such answers in detail, as compared with the flaring press headlines about strikes, is like the attempt to retract on page sixteen a libel in the previous day's editions on page one. The retraction never catches up with the libel. So long as the same economic power group controls both the armament industries and the opinion industries, one cannot rely on reason and persuasion to fight corporate aggression.

That is why we must perfect the machinery we have begun to set up for minimizing and settling labor-management troubles (this is the better term—they are not just labor troubles) in the defense industries. To that end I should like to propose a brief and summary program:

1. Proceed on the premise that strikes are a normal, not an abnormal, part of the process by which the less privileged groups in our society can get some increase in living standards and some social advance from the possessing groups. To treat every strike as an outbreak of leprosy is to stifle at the start any chance for progress. But proceed also on the premise that strikes are not an end in themselves; and that if wisely handled they can be settled and even, for the most part, avoided.

2. Differentiate between jurisdictional strikes and those in which the employer is not caught helplessly between two unions. Set up a separate mechanism for dealing directly with jurisdictional strikes.

3. Differentiate between strikes (such as the Bethlehem and Ford strikes) that are called for the purpose of winning collective bargaining, and those (such as that in coal and the threatened strike in General Motors) that are called to win a better contract after collective bargaining has already been in force.

4. In the first type of strike, a waiting-period would be fatal to the workers; and the best that can be done is to ensure orderly picketing on one side and no violence on the other, to offer mediation by the government and to enforce the National Labor Relations Act.

5. In the second kind of strike, adopt increasingly in all industries the principle of the Railway Mediation Board—the principle of a waiting period or "breathing spell," during which there is to be neither strike nor lockout. But there are two provisos of the utmost importance. The waiting period is of no use unless during that time there are actual negotiations going on between management and workers. And it is of the greatest efficacy when the provision for it is written directly into the labor agreement.

6. Use to the full the machinery of the new National Mediation Board. It is a board with first-rate personnel. But we may as well recognize that this is more than an emergency, and give the board a more permanent character. The conciliation functions of the Department of Labor should be merged with it; it should not have to wait until a case has been certified to it; and it should be given a greater administrative spread and staff.

7. Empower the Mediation Board, if its efforts fail, to go to the country with a report of what caused the failure. Because of the danger that the press will ignore or distort the report, place at the disposal of the board the full radio facilities of the national networks in order to direct the white light of publicity upon those really to blame.

This program is no cure-all. Since strikes are an organic part of our social system, they will be cured only when that system is really democratized. Meanwhile, however, the program offers us a chance to minimize economic frictions and concentrate our energies on the political and military problems of our generation.

MAX LERNER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

Good News on the Home Front

As NEWS FROM ABROAD gets worse, news at home (much of it unprinted) gets better. Congressional committees investigating the progress of the national-defense effort have been told by military authorities that production is running ahead of schedule. Comparing 1941 with 1917, Secretary of War Stimson testified that the new army was six months ahead of its World War counterpart.

The strike front has become a quiet sector, much to the dismay of Representatives Eugene Cox of Georgia, Howard W. Smith of Virginia and their friends, who were depending upon continued shooting to frighten Congress into passing a law. Instead, the Southern open-shoppers are a crestfallen crowd. The brilliant success of the Dykstra Mediation Board has knocked the wind out of them. Not that they won't get it back before the session is over, but their chances of passing the kind of labor legislation they favor seem negligible.

They were counting on the House Military Affairs Committee, which is packed with their fellow travelers, to make their case. But the committee for more than a week couldn't find anyone in authority to agree with its thesis that strikes had seriously interrupted the national-defense program. Even William Knudsen wouldn't tell the committee what it wanted to hear. Secretary of the Navy Knox finally accommodated with a guarded endorsement "in principle" of legislation to impose a pre-strike waiting period, but his reservations were disappointing. The committee finally had to fall back on J. B. Matthews, former professional Communist stooge and Dies Committee investigator, for testimony that all the recent strikes were traceable to Communists intent upon defense wrecking.

The President's strategy of waiting for the strike-provoked hysteria to die down, meanwhile satisfying the public clamor by appointment of a mediation board, proved highly successful. The Harvester and Allis-Chalmers strikes, as well as those threatened in steel, were settled quickly, leaving Henry Ford isolated and with no choice but to come to terms with the United Automobile Workers. The soft-coal deadlock lingered on, to be sure, but so quietly that it failed to revive the March panic.

Excitement over strikes at home and the military debacles abroad obscured the importance of what may amount to a complete reorganization of the defense set-up by the President. Creation of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply and the appointment of Leon Henderson to administer it constituted such a reorganization, potentially if not yet actually.

Mr. Henderson's organization, as constituted by the President's executive order and explained by the Administrator, is far more than a mere price-control appendage to the Office of Emergency Production. It is the over-all planning agency whose master pattern is intended to become the design which all other defense agencies must follow. Both its prospectus and its personnel hold promise of good things. Whether the promise is fulfilled will, of course, depend upon coöperation from the dollar-a-year bosses of other agencies and similar factors.

It should be noted that while OPACS is in the Office of Emergency Production—the top agency in the defense-organization chart—it is not subordinate to the OPM, the agency administered by Mr. Knudsen and Sidney Hillman.

Mr. Henderson has all the power to control prices, directly and indirectly, that the War Industries Board had in 1917. He has, in addition, the advantage of the War Industries Board's experience, the advice of Bernard Baruch, its chairman, all the wealth of information collected by New Deal agencies since 1933, several excellent studies of the methods employed by Germany, Japan and Canada, and an early start.

That he means business stood out as plain as the Washington monument when he issued the schedule freezing steel prices at the levels which prevailed during the first quarter of 1941. Steel men, and a great many other industrialists, simply could not believe their eyes and their ears, even though he accompanied the order with a promise to study the price and cost situation in the industry and adjust the price schedules if such action was necessary. It seems that he had heard that certain small steel companies were just on the verge of boosting prices. Instead of waiting to try to correct a bad situation after it was established, he took fast action to prevent one. Which was news indeed in Washington.

In so far as possible, Mr. Henderson will prevent sharp price rises at their source. By studying productive capacity, keeping track of raw-material stocks and planning ahead, he will try to foresee shortages and do something in advance. Even before his present office with all its powers was created and he was a cog in the OPM machine, Mr. Henderson practised some of this preventive economic medicine. He persuaded the administration to import copper, for example, and suggested building up quartermaster stock piles. There will be more of this.

He was at least partially responsible for the remarkable situation in which the price index rose only from 78 to 82, while the production index was rising from 110 to 145, up to the time the lease-lend legislation began to take effect.

However, some prices have got out of hand and something will be done to bring them down. On Mr. Henderson's list of suspects in addition to steel are cotton textiles, coal, drugs, chemicals, non-ferrous metals, machinery, hides and leather. There is evidence, he thinks, that entrepreneurs in these industries have been "greedy." One drug concocter is making a modest profit of 1,000 percent out of the shortage created by defense demand.

Thanks to his background of academic economics, his long experience with the New Deal (he has served in the NRA, the WPA and the SEC), Mr. Henderson is well equipped for his big job. He has the know-how. He also has the will to maintain an economic balance which will not cut the real wages of the little fellow with a high-cost-of-living axe. If price inflation can be prevented in this emergency and after—and it does not seem impossible—Mr. Henderson should be able to do it. His appointment is heartening to those of us who have misgivings about the motives and efficiency of some of the cheap dollar-a-year help now in the government.

Washington T. R. B.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nothing to Write Home About

"THE SEA WOLF" is a straight adventure picture with overtones of megalomania and sadism, done in a forthright way with actors, a full-rigged ship and the big Warner tank stage. The story is among the best adventure fictions, and betters many such in having as its chief character in terror and villainy a man who makes an intellectual hobby of such qualities. It throws a writer, two young and rather tough escaped convicts (boy and girl), a rum-busted doctor, a crew of Warner's best stock plug-uglies and Barry Fitzgerald into the hands of Wolf Larsen, the hazing master of a death ship, a latter-day pirate schooner. And it rises through beatings, suicide, mutiny and attempts at escape to its big climax. The writer, the boy and the girl who have got adrift and lost in their open boat before the Wolf is struck down, stumble back alongside the schooner in a chance fog to find the captain alone and blind in his ruined ship, malevolent still.

Here in the new version the story is given a $900,000 production. It has the violent direction of Michael Curtiz, who among many qualities is known for his almost daily insistence we should have some moofing with business, and who has achieved some good big mass scenes and tumult. And it has the characters of Edward G. Robinson, Ida Lupino, Barry Fitzgerald, Gene Lockhart, John Garfield, Alexander Knox and Stanley Ridges. All are good, the first four particularly, and though it is Robinson's picture by definition, he is in there working anyway and making his bulk and bluster seem to mean it. The construction, lighting and difficult special effects are marvelous for workmanship and resource; and everything is there. But where is the original wonder?

Like most of Jack London's fiction itself, the story loses persuasion through careless overpassing of the small but necessary, through overconfidence in the strident no matter how clumsy. For example, you can't hate Larson enough not to respect him above the vague or purposeless spirits *we* are supposed to admire but *he* had to put up with. John Garfield was made to give out so much and take so little that whatever he got in punches on the nose, he was welcome. The writer shouldn't have been allowed near a duck pond without his mother or agent. The girl talked about despair and the end, but plenty of nice little ladies have lost more on simple Bermuda cruises than she lost here, and certainly with more show of gratitude, not trying to kill themselves all over the footage. That much could be charged to writing, but there are things about direction as well. The final hulk with its lurking madman should have been loaded with terror but was mostly filled with dialogue; the Wolf's return from the dead should have been built up as cold shock, but was telegraphed in advance.

Perhaps the miracles of melodrama belong properly in childhood anyway, or some place where faith is based on simple things, where just to be told is to believe, and have nightmares. And while the movies do wonderfully with illusion, in cases like this their magic—financial and technical resources of such a magnitude as to take your breath away and leave no hat check—is all expended on making near-reality out of the actual. But true illusion demands participation always; and the plain fact is, they have carried your imagination so far in a litter that it has gone to sleep, and will yawn instead of function. Their indoor ocean is just about everything marvelous but an ocean—and in the same way you will find their sea wolf interesting and want to pat its head.

On Miss Durbin's latest life-saver for Universal Pictures I am killing myself with gags about how "Nice Girl" tolls the little knell of parting Deanna, but I'll be all right in a minute. The film isn't important but it is one of those things which have nice things in them and a promise, and then practically spit in the eye of human nature merely for a plot twist or the lack of it. Also it is the end of Deanna Durbin as papoose, which may possibly be the end of her serious contentions to Bette Davis, for her face in the camera set-ups of this first grown-up stage has little more modeling or character than a corsage of mushrooms, and her acting range is what is chalked on the floor so she won't get out of focus. The story has her in love with a dope without her knowing it, or his either, and rebelling against the non-romance of her home life as young girls will every time, the silly dears. Franchot Tone comes from the city just to look in, and she decides that is for her and connives to get back to town with him and into pajamas (as the silly dears won't, my friends can tell you).

Up to here it has been quite human and nice, because what are people going to do with themselves anyway, and Robert Benchley as the father has made a well disordered home out of all this going on around, and in town Franchot is half polite, half humorous, as one would wish to be for the sake of the story—and then we have our tantrums. Youth sees what a fool it has been and rushes back home, ki-yi, ki-yi, and proceeds to its final happy triumph by a process of being strictly venomous to everyone. As some have speculated, the question-mark after the title may be more than the snide device it certainly is fundamentally. Universal is wondering what to do with Deanna, now she has outdistanced the quintuplets, make her a nice girl? They'd better.

I can't speak with much authority, here in the center of the film industry, because the only pictures being shown to the natives are pictures long gone from New York, so nice to have seen them. But from my first sneak preview I should say that the Hollywood audience is a heartening one to try pictures out on for the same reason that producers' stooges are good men to try producers' jokes out on: they double up well before the punch line and Oh it's *murder*, Chief. At the showing of "Repent at Leisure," directed by Frank Woodruff for RKO, they laughed and laughed, and they couldn't have all been the producer's mother because his mother and staff left at the end and the feature came on and they laughed and laughed again.

"Repent at Leisure" has some sharp angles to it but the story of the department-store owner's daughter (Wendy Barrie) and the non-traveling salesman she marries (Kent Taylor) is just one more suddenly-necessary-husband-and-baby situation. Movie writers are hard put to it these days to concoct something that is (1) national defense, (2) no offense to anyone, and so an affair like this gets into a B-producer's schedule almost automatically. To keep the plot going the young fellow has to make himself quite un-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bearable, but there is a certain comedy life throughout, and if you're passing time waiting for the first feature, you can at least use it for comparisons and for a textbook on how to write nothing much. OTIS FERGUSON

P. S. – If possible, arrange to miss "That Night in Rio," which is a good example of Don Ameche and absolutely nothing filmed in technicolor. And "Scotland Yard," despite a fine performance by Edmund Gwenn, adds up to very little because of a phony story about a bank robber who is wounded in the war and gets the wrong face grafted on him. Even the London blackout scenes, shots of Dunkirk and references to the war can't cover up slow, jerky pacing and wooden acting. M. B.

Mahler Before Anschluss

THREE YEARS AGO the Vienna Philharmonic gave a concert performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony in the old Musikerverein hall. It was something of an event. Bruno Walter was on the stand with the ability and determination to bring out everything in his old friend's last work, and he had the orchestra, the extra players brought in for the occasion, and I think the good feeling of an intelligent and appreciative audience right with him too. It was winter and you could hear a variety of coughs in the hall. Once a string popped and during a tense moment in the first movement the screw holding a music stand at the proper height let go suddenly and down everything came with a crash. This was in Vienna on Sunday, January 16, 1938.

Today you hear all these sounds in addition to the music itself as many times as you play the recording Victor happened to make of this performance (M-726, 20 sides; $10.50), and while the sadness and grandeur of the symphony fit the occasion remarkably, it is probably these little off-the-record noises more than anything else which will draw your attention back to the date with somewhat the effect of the camera which swept the deck of an outbound liner coming to a stop on the word Titanic. Austria was already near the end. Chancellor Schuschnigg's unhappy visit to Berchtesgaden was less than three weeks off. There would shortly be no more Mahler in Vienna (no more Walter either), because there would be young knights with boots and a bloodstream and extraordinary sensitivity to purity in art instead.

Like Milton in the parlor bookcase, Mahler's name lifts respectful eyebrows but not paid admissions, and conductors with an eye to splash usually keep well over on the other sidewalk. He moves in on a symphony like a battleship, unrolling interminable themes and occasionally loosing a ponderous broadside of brass and drums, spacing them out with long pauses and soul-searchings such as would drive any good Hollywood man with a pair of scissors to tears. He stays with it right down to the last round, as halfway through the leisurely opening theme you know he will, and it's a matter of the good part of an afternoon to make up your mind to it, hear it through, and then get out from under its influence.

Still, there is no point in exaggerating Mahler's length and slow motion, as so many do. Those themes, long and watered and as boxed in with qualifying clauses as anything that ever came out of the British Foreign Office—when first announced, are progressively condensed in development so there is a forward pull and the pleasant sense of gathering speed on a slight incline. And the sheer bulk of the symphony, its broad lines and masses of tone, have a way of making you a party to the proceedings.

It is generally assumed that composers use the symphony orchestra simply as a means of self-expression. Many of them do, particularly those whose only contacts with it have been through Forsyth's "Orchestration" or something like it. But there have been men who loved the orchestra for itself, and who wrote music not so much to express themselves as to enable the orchestra to sound in its best and most natural lines and tones. An orchestra man can understand that, and so can anyone who has stayed around rehearsal rooms long enough to find fascination in the sight of forty violins bowing in perfect unison, or in the faint smell of old wood, resin, valve oil or plush-lined instrument cases. It is the fascination that will prompt a trumpeter to pack his instrument and go off to read through a little Wagner or Beethoven with friends after a hard day in the pit. Berlioz was a composer who was strongly affected this way. I suspect that Mahler and Bruckner and Strauss (Richard) were also; more than any of them would admit.

In his Ninth, Mahler is strong on world-weariness (only the Germans can use that expression without feeling foolish), strong on counterpoint, strings and brass. The brass section is characteristically German—with big bores and wide flaring bells, dull in tone but with great breadth and power, like none other in all the world. The horns he uses singly, in pairs and in quartets, and they are quite beautiful here, spreading in and around the strings in a flood of red and gold, or scaling up in unison against a theme in the violins over salvos from the battery. There is a solitary trombone declaiming on a single note in the somber voice of Jonathan Edwards; there are some fine trumpets. You will hear them whooping up the treble in fanfares and then (the Mahler touch) the basses will be grinding in on a tone like a great gong—the diminished fifth of the chord—and then everything is suddenly grown cold.

On the whole it is difficult to put a finger on one phrase or effect and say "there, *that* was something," because Mahler didn't write that way. What is really fine is what you still remember an hour after the music has stopped, the accumulated effect of an hour and twenty minutes of music. And that is considerable, because this ranks with *Das Lied von der Erde* as one of old Mahler's crowning achievements. Its defects and its virtues are those of the era whose passing it helped to mark. It is a little shabby in spots, and a little too big for its own good, and somewhat rambling, like an old baroque house of the period when an hour or two this way or that didn't make much difference. And the performance somehow matches the composition in this way.

That was in Vienna on January 16, 1938. Toward the end the music subsides to a mood of melancholy tranquility and there are echoes and half whispers of the final theme wandering around as though through empty corridors and rooms of the old baroque house like so many ghosts, lingering and not wanting to go. But they did go, and when the last notes died away and the audience began to clap, it was cut off very suddenly. STANLEY FERGUSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Bandwagon

Trim, green-eyed, with brown hair and a taste for simple clothes in mossy greens and browns, she is the mother of two sons, aged sixteen and eighteen, and lives in a charming country house in Dedham, where her husband is harboring a British refugee fox hound. – *From "Sketches," by Natalie Gordon, in The Boston Traveler.*

In his most optimistic moments, and no one could ever charge him with being a saddist, he never contemplated such a triumph at his time of life.– *An editorial on the actor, Norman W. Mason, in The (Nova Scotia) Eastern Chronicle.*

The reason that the flying farmer is not a common sight today is due largely to the cost of planes. – *Senator Robert R. Reynolds in an article on "Flying Farmers" in The Southern Agriculturist.*

Easy Does It

A Rome military communiqué said Italian forces operating in northwest Yugoslavia had occupied Ljubjana, previously taken by the Germans. – *News item in The New York Times.*

And "Cleared for Action" for the Bald?

Hair won't be long any more, so they say, but neat and short with maybe bangs and pompadours in simple, easy-to-fix fashion. No fancy little curls—instead, undulating waves to signify the world's turbulence—"Salvo," with black curls suggesting cannon shots; "Active Service," upswept with bangs. – *An item printed in Saturday Night (Toronto).*

Set a Thief

Detective—Store. Must have proven shoplifting record; out-of-town position; give age and salary desired. Box L 291 Times. – *A help-wanted advertisement in The New York Times.*

Locking the Barn Door

The Indiana Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the Union today demanded government control of labor unions and regulation of strikes.

Another resolution adopted at the annual convention urged each member to try to wake people up to dangers confronting democracy. – *AP dispatch printed in The South Bend Tribune.*

Woman's-Place Department

Women have become as necessary to the funeral home as they are to the private home, Mrs. Inez Madsen of Worthington, Minnesota, told a special women's clinic today at the Minnesota Funeral Directors' Association convention at the Minneapolis auditorium. – *Item printed in The Minneapolis Star Journal.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Honesty in Aid-to-Britain

SIR: Recently I was invited to add my signature to a letter to the President sponsored by Henry Sloane Coffin and others. The letter emphasized the necessity for the United States to see to it that Britain is supplied with food as well as military materials.

Wholeheartedly as I agree with this, I did not sign the letter because in all its 500 words, the very words which the whole letter was about—American ships and United States naval convoys—were carefully omitted. This is one more example of the consistent and degrading evasiveness of the aid-to-Britain "line."

Time and again I have squirmed with embarrassment while listening to our aid-to-Britain speakers on radio forums making a monkey out of our cause by hemming and hawing, and sometimes running incontinently for the tall timber the minute their isolationist opponents tried to pin them down on precisely how far they would go in aiding Britain.

What is there about the fact that our way of life is being fought for on battlefields, and that we may have to fight for it too, that is so unmentionable? Why the equivocations about the possibility that if we mean what we say, we may have to fight for what we mean? Isn't it time that we dropped the transparently self-contradictory slogan "all aid to Britain short of war," and instead substituted: All aid to Britain, period, and let Hitler be the one to take it up from there, if he wants to? (N. B. Hitler didn't take up the destroyer deal, or any of the President's "provocative" utterances, or the lease-lend bill, or countless minor episodes such as have already cost a dozen push-over nations in Europe their lives.)

I am told that aid-to-Britain is a delicate question. I deny it. No question upon which the last election and the Gallup polls have shown us to be as preponderantly united as we are on this one can be considered in the slightest degree delicate. So, in the interests of candor, let the aid-to-Britain policy-makers get off the tightrope, on which they are putting on a none too graceful performance, and clump along on solid ground with the 67 percent of Americans who are willing to aid Britain *even at the risk of war.*

When we have frankly admitted that aid to Britain *may* mean war (though so far it has meant no such thing, the isolationists repeatedly to the contrary notwithstanding), instead of letting these same isolationists continue to insist that it *will* mean war, we shall not have duped anybody, we shall have disarmed our opponents of their weapon fashioned out of our own evasiveness, and we may even acquire a reputation for that sincerity which, of late, seems to have become the exclusive property of Mr. Lindbergh.

Honesty is the best policy simply because, throughout the ages, it has worked best.

Los Angeles, Calif. HUMPHREY COBB

Marooned States

SIR: Having been an enthusiast about the St. Lawrence Waterway for fifty years, ever since the late Senator Cushman K. Davis of Minnesota wrote an article in The North American Review in 1891, entitled "Our Lake Commerce and Ways to the Sea," I was much interested in your editorial on the subject (The New Republic, March 24).

The most effective opposition in the past, aside from the ele-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments you mention, has come from Chicago, which wanted to drain Lake Michigan into the Illinois River so as to carry sewage into the Mississippi and save the expense of building proper sewage-disposal plants; from Buffalo, which owns a toll gate on cargo transfers; and from all Atlantic Coast cities which profit by the nullification of the long-and-short-haul clause of the Interstate Commerce Act through court decisions arising from conditions brought about by the building of the Panama Canal.

People of the present generation seem to have forgotten all about this great injustice to the Middle West. I have just dug up an issue of The Duluth News Tribune of December 26, 1926, which contains a map of "The Marooned Portion of the United States." The map shows that all of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming and Montana are completely in the marooned area on account of freight-rate discrimination that would be obliterated should the St. Lawrence Waterway be opened. Portions of New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, Texas, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington are similarly discriminated against.

DUDLEY WARNER FREEMAN

Eveleth, Minn.

PM's Predecessor

SIR: As an abettor in a recent ill fated newspaper experiment, I would like to add a few lines that may be assets for your "Balance Sheet of American Journalism" (The New Republic, March 10).

In Hartford, Connecticut, just over a year ago—March 4, to be exact—there was born a daily newspaper modern both in editorial ideas and typographical design—a newspaper conceived with the particular intent of making that American dictum about "freedom of the press" mean something. In the opinion of its young editors, who were also the principal stockholders, newspapers in general were losing their vitality, integrity, and ultimately their usefulness, mainly because of their big-business character. They felt that while there was more urgent need for public understanding of trends and events than ever, the reporting in the majority of large dailies had become dull, standardized, even stagnant. They agreed with Herbert Agar that "the public will not long support so unimaginative and boring an institution. . . ."

Next to making a living for its founders, the major aim of the venture was a planned paper—the vital information of the day selected, arranged and condensed to suit the modern reader's haste and to enlarge his knowledge. A paper, too, which through independent management could guarantee its freedom from every outside influence except the editor's conscience, and which would be built financially, as well as editorially, around the forgotten reader. In contrast with most papers, the basis of its economy was to be circulation revenue, with profit coming from a limited amount of advertising. No comics, columnists and headlines were to contaminate the editors' desire to inform only by publishing news. Realizing the vivid reportorial value of pictures, they determined to fill half the paper with picture stories. All this was to cost the reader five cents.

With only $75,000 to squander, The Newsdaily, as it was called, had to operate on the thinnest of shoestrings. Lithography, because it was cheap and reproduced pictures well, was chosen as the most suitable printing process, although it had never before been applied to a metropolitan daily. Eleanor Treacy, former art editor of Fortune, tried to create a simple and harmonious dress for the paper, which for convenience's sake was to have sixteen tabloid-size pages. And after eighteen months of hectic development the conception came to life.

In three months it ceased. Born amid a blizzard and the awful pains of press trouble, it may have been foredoomed. Certainly, two factors were the lack of sufficient capital and the editors' inexperience. The importance of features, columnists, comics, social news had apparently been underestimated; the editors learned that the human, trivial and familiar comes closest home to the majority of readers. The chief obstacle to success was The Newsdaily's newness, including the nickel price. A survey of reader reaction showed that while half of those interviewed liked the paper, more than 80 percent read another evening paper. Best liked were the pictures and tabloid size. Disliked most were the brevity and five-cent price. Over and above all specific criticism was the vague reader feeling that out of The Newsdaily had emerged no definite personality.

Admitting the faults and failures of the Hartford experiment does not impair the validity of its basic original aims. The ex-editors still believe these are necessary to preserve and promote America's free-press tradition.

Hartford, Conn. ELLSWORTH S. GRANT

No More Communists

SIR: I see where Mr. Prendergast of Local 5, AFT, takes you to task for saying that this body is dominated by Stalinists [The New Republic, April 7]. Mr. Prendergast is correct. I say this because I have made a careful investigation of all organized groups in America and have found no Communists in any of them. There are no Communists in the teachers' organizations, in the Transport Workers' Union, in the National Maritime Union or in the CIO. No Communists will parade on May Day, and of course it is false to say that Communists engineered the American People's Meeting. In fact my researches reveal that there are no Communists in the so-called Communist Party and, of course, we all know that there are no Communists in the Soviet Union now that Stalin has liquidated them all. So what's all the fuss about—and please stop your red-baiting.

New York City I. B. A.

The Three War Views

SIR: In choosing between the point of view of The New Republic's editors and that of John T. Flynn, I distinctly prefer that of the editors. But Mr. Flynn has not only a sharp tongue but a sharp mind, and he has used it to spot the weak points in The New Republic's armor.

Mr. Flynn is right when he says that not he but The New Republic has changed. The New Republic would strengthen its case if it acknowledged this. Mr. Flynn sticks dogmatically to a position that was developed and held by many liberals in an age that has vanished. The New Republic might well ask if there is any sounder method of dealing with the uncertain course of future events than the pragmatic one of adopting a well considered position, holding it tentatively, and developing or altering it to suit real circumstances. The significance of free speech, of the free flow of information, is that it permits us to use our intelligence in just that way.

There are three major divisions of opinion on this great question of our foreign policy:

1. About one-fourth of the people believe, as Mr. Flynn does, that this is not our war and that we should keep away from it. Some of these, like Mr. Flynn and Charles A. Beard, are men of liberal intent who want us to devote ourselves exclusively to the cultivation of democracy at home. Some are aggressive imperialists with their eyes on Canada and Latin America. Others are just anti-Roosevelt reactionaries.

2. About 60 percent of the people believe, as The New Republic does, that the safety of the United States and of world

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

democracy are involved in British success and that the United States must give material aid. Some of these are merely modified isolationists who believe that this procedure will give us time to arm and make ultimate conflict less probable. Others believe that a Nazi victory over Britain would in itself be a tragedy which must be prevented at any cost, but that our entrance into the war should come only as a last resort.

3. The remaining 15 percent believe we should go to war now. Some take this position because they believe this would be the most effective way to throw our full available resources into the scale and still retain these resources (except for what is destroyed in action) for our own use in case Britain should go down. Others add a moral consideration, saying that if it is "our war," if our ideals are at stake, why must Britain supply all the blood and tears? Still others ask how America expects to be prepared to play a part in any post-war organization of collective security if it cannot bring itself to face the responsibilities and democratic meaning of collective security in this hour of crisis.

Should not the advocates of all these points of view have an opportunity to present their several cases fully in the pages of our liberal journals? The divisions of opinion are not those of liberalism v. conservatism. I happen to be one of those who hold the third view, and so I am especially conscious that it is not being presented in The New Republic or, so far as I know, in any other journal.

New York City AUGUSTUS PIGMAN

The Case of H. T. Tsiang

SIR: May I call the attention of your readers to the plight of H. T. Tsiang, Chinese poet, patriot, student and champion of social justice, who, for reasons no one seems to understand, has spent the best part of a year on Ellis Island, awaiting deportation.

Tsiang is a good poet, at least in English; as his book, "The Hanging in Union Square," proves. He is a sufficiently good student to have been awarded a scholarship by Dr. Alvin Johnson at the New School for Social Research. And he is a sufficiently good man to have inspired outstanding citizens like John Dewey, Bruce Bliven, Archibald MacLeish, John Haynes Holmes, Rockwell Kent, Lewis Gannett and others to interest themselves in his case and to write letters about it. No one, so far as I know (except perhaps his enemies, the Japanese army), thinks the man should be sent back to China, where possibly death awaits him. Yet because of the inscrutable calculus of some Washington Circumlocution Office, nothing appears to be done about it.

Perhaps a bunch of letters from men and women of good will to Madame Perkins, Thurman Arnold, or the chief of the Department of Justice, will bring about the release of this courageous and gifted young man. His case number is 56019/532.

New York City WALDO FRANK

Nuts for Science to Crack

SIR: Bruce Bliven's articles on the promise of science for the near future are extremely interesting and encouraging. But what about the chances of moral and social progress? What are the men of science doing for the third of the population that are ill housed, ill fed and ill clad, and for the sharecroppers, struggling tenants and unemployed?

No doubt our reactionaries and Bourbons would benefit from operations on their glands and psychoanalytic treatment, but how can we compel them to submit to such treatment, or to pay any attention to the conclusions of science?

Man, said Aristotle, if he have no virtue, is the most savage and unholy of animals. What can we do, under scientific guidance, to civilize and socialize the ape-men and the moral imbeciles among us—the Hitlers and Mussolinis, the industrial autocrats, the arrogant plutocrats, the hate-ridden and hate-filled rabble-rousers?

What can we do, under the guidance of science, to improve our educational system and build character, increase the available amount of *good will* in the world, give the younger generation ideas of justice and righteousness? Technological advance is certain. Moral advance, alas, is very far from certain. Let science attack the problems in the sphere of ethics and economics, in respect of which there is so little agreement. The failure to solve these problems will destroy our civilization, despite the brilliant achievements and promises of technology.

Winter Park, Fla. VICTOR S. YARROS

From The New Republic Mail Bag

This seems to be open season on editors—on New Republic editors anyway. Sidney Blackstone of Chicago has concluded that "in 1941 at least" there's more wisdom, clarity, profundity and numerous other virtues in "one article of Mike Gold than in volumes of The NR." Harold V. King of New York City by way of Michigan University also holds us up to unfavorable comparison, this time to "the restrained and logical reasoning of Colonel Lindbergh and the attitude of Senator Wheeler and Mr. John T. Flynn." Mr. King, who says he has not yet decided upon the wisdom of the Roosevelt policy, wants to base his decision on the best information from all sources, but considers The New Republic too "blindly pro-Roosevelt," in the current crisis at least. Our mail bag has carried similar protests, although no recent ones from our friends in Norway, Holland, Belgium, France and numerous other countries, but Mr. King's is so honestly stated that we can only say that (1) we hope we are wrong about the immediacy of our peril (we'll always take a pleasant surprise in preference to an unpleasant one); and (2) we hope Mr. King will like what he calls "our generally progressive spirit and good book reviews" well enough to be back.

James O'Neil protests from Illinois that we should "not be trying to pester the British about war aims," while Robert A. Emerick of Detroit holds that this country "should insist on knowing what it is fighting for" and asks if it is to help keep the British "pluto-democracy" in power.... Red Kann encloses a copy of his column in Boxoffice in which he reviews the "Citizen Kane" affair. Mr. Kann writes that after much scurrying and consulting, the RKO directors concluded that (1) if they didn't release the film, Orson Welles might sue, (2) if they did release it, Hearst might sue, (3) in which case they might as well show it and get some consolation at the box office.

Conrad Pendleton's poem, "Freightbells in Oregon" (The New Republic, March 31), draws praise from Ravenna Fort, Seattle, who calls it a "robust and genuine interpretation of the Pacific northwest."

Paul Brinkman Jr. of Portland, Oregon, thinks the seizure of German and Italian ships "is the kind of moral conduct which is far nearer Nazi ethics than democratic." . . . D. L. Powell Jr., of Detroit, writes to praise "Bible Belt Nazis" (The New Republic, March 10) and suggests it should be made available in inexpensive leaflet form. . . . C. G. Middleton of San Juan Harbor, Washington, helps restore our deflated ego by complimenting The New Republic on being calm, clear and dispassionate about world events.

The Providence Sunday Journal will pay at space rates for verse of high literary quality. It plans to publish a weekly column, intended as a newspaper experiment, and does not desire "homey" verse. Send manuscripts to W. T. Scott, New Verse, Providence Sunday Journal, Providence, Rhode Island.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Milton as Social Philosopher

IF AMERICAN SCHOLARS are manifesting an increasing interest in the political theory of the Puritan Revolution, it is because of their recognition that that period, like our own, was one of revolutionary change in which social institutions and relationships were drastically transformed. A rising middle class, eager to exploit the potentialities of an expanding society, found itself thwarted by a feudal monarchy and nobility and by an ecclesiastical absolutism; from that conflict, the Civil War was born. But when the middle classes had achieved their victory, they found themselves confronted by their own class-conscious army and by vigorous popular movements whose members, inspired by radical social ideals the war had generated, were insisting that the fruits of victory be shared. The Cromwellian dictatorship was an effort to arrest the progress of the revolution at a point most favorable to its original middle-class makers. The search of the Commonwealth for an adequate political basis for the new middle-class state failed because of the dissatisfaction of the poor and the divisions among the victors. And when political instability threatened to jeopardize the results of the Revolution, the Restoration of 1660—a compromise between the aristocracy and the middle classes—became, for the latter, a political necessity.

It is against that background, complicated by the ecclesiastical and religious struggles of the period, that Mr. Wolfe has set his study of Milton's political ideas.[1] He has read exhaustively in the vast pamphlet literature the revolutionary ferment produced. He appreciates the complexity of the period. He knows that no thinker can be abstracted from the social and intellectual climate of his age. And he is fully aware that the impact of event on thought is fundamental to the understanding of any social theory.

Mr. Wolfe's treatment of the subject matter as a series of "ideological topics" tends to make his book a series of essays rather than an architectonic whole. But from his pages there emerges a full picture of the poet as social thinker. We see the Puritan to whom Scripture was the ultimate source of truth but whose religious individualism enabled him to throw off the shackles of tradition; the rebel against orthodoxy who could never free himself of the strains of Calvinistic influence; the intellectual whose energy, fired by the fusion of religious enthusiasm and revolutionary idealism, would not permit him to stand apart from the dynamic conflicts of his day; the intellectual aristocrat who, aware of his superiority, was contemptuous of the intelligence of the common people; the visionary who knew he had seen the truth and who became increasingly impatient with the inability of his fellows to share his exalted ideal; the thinker who, having conceived the end, was utterly indifferent to the means of achieving it.

Milton was dominated throughout his life, as Mr. Wolfe shows, by the ideal of a society in which religion would be able to fulfil its function of making men free. That meant, as Milton insisted, the complete separation of Church and State and the abolition of support of the ministry through tithes or public revenues. It meant, too, complete freedom of individual interpretation and expression—a principle which the "Areopagitica" so eloquently extended to the secular sphere. Mr. Wolfe has adequately seen the influence of Milton's personal experiences—his "church-outing" by the prelates, the reception of his divorce tracts—on the development of those views.

The core of his political theory was his conception of leadership and government by an intellectual and spiritual aristocracy. Of majority rule, he will have no part. The masses, unfit to govern, must be ruled by the enlightened and the spiritually free. Politically impractical, devoid of any understanding of social development or historical processes, Milton is wholly unsympathetic to democracy. Passionately dedicated to the ends he has conceived, he is concerned solely with the quickest way of achieving them. If men refuse to be free, they must be dragooned into righteousness and liberty. Milton was therefore able to transfer his support—as he so frequently did—to any group or individual who seemed capable of imposing that order. Disillusion is the central theme of his experience. And the failure of every group in whom he rested his hope for the realization of his ideal made him increasingly impatient and bitter.

For all his incomparable eloquence, Milton made no significant original contribution to the political theory of his century. On tithes, on disestablishment, he was, as Mr. Wolfe asserts, as radical as anyone in his generation. But his toleration was limited to Protestants; Walwyn, Overton, Roger Williams, among others, were far in advance of his position. He is consistently undemocratic. Nowhere is he actuated by any concern for the poor or sensitivity to the suffering of the oppressed. Essentially, he was a spokesman for the upper middle classes. Accepting the early stages of the Revolution, he shrank from its conclusion.

Among the most valuable sections of this volume are those devoted to contemporary thinkers and movements. On Overton, on Walwyn, on Lilburne, on Roger Williams, on Cromwell ("immature wrestler with ideas but master of practical psychology, master of men and timer of action"), Mr. Wolfe says the just thing with point and insight. And yet, his study might have been fuller had he examined more closely the surge of mystical religion among the poorer classes in the early years of the war, its transformation into economic radicalism as, with the maturation of their political consciousness, the people learned to express their hopes and aspirations in secular rather than religious terms; and its resurgence in the 1650's with the suppression of political radicalism by the Cromwellian dictatorship. He might have emphasized to a greater degree the class nature of the ecclesiastical controversy; the disputes over church government were largely a controversy as to who was to address the masses on social issues. A more careful examination of the depth of popular unrest and radicalism in the crucial 1647-50 period would have given him some clue to the intensification of Milton's fear of the masses that, in his later years, became almost a mania. Mr. Wolfe has not been too careful in dating several pamphlets; on this score, his valuable bibliographies must be used with some caution.

But these are small matters. Mr. Wolfe has given us a rich, scholarly volume that is fully worthy of the events and themes he discusses. It will become indispensable not only to anyone interested in Milton but to the student of one of the most fascinating periods in the history of political thought.

DAVID W. PETEGORSKY

[1] Milton in the Puritan Revolution, by Don M. Wolfe. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 496 pages. $4.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Where the World Is Going

JAMES BURNHAM is about the first of the former Marxists who, in the general bankruptcy of political thinking, has brought forth a new and plausible explanation of what is happening in the world. He calls it the theory of the managerial revolution.[1]

Reduced to its bare outlines, his theory is that capitalism is doomed and will shortly perish, but that socialism will not take its place. What we can expect is a new form of class domination, already present in Russia and Germany and foreshadowed in this country by the New Deal. The revolution that will usher in this society began in 1914, with what Mr. Burnham calls the last war of capitalism. It continued after the Armistice, with the withdrawal of more and more capitalists from the actual management of their enterprises, and with the extension of government control over more and more sectors of economic life. Since the outbreak of the Second World War, which Mr. Burnham calls the first war of managerial society, the revolution has moved more rapidly, and in a few years from now it will have conquered the earth. The result of it will be a new ruling class, new economic and political institutions and new ideologies.

Much of the book is devoted to the outlines of the new society. Its ruling class will be the managers, defined as the men who actually manage production, transportation, distribution, propaganda and political administration. The new economic framework will be government ownership of the means of production, with the managers controlling the government. The political framework will be rule by government bureaus, agencies and commissions, instead of by parliaments. The new ideologies will be based on Stalinism, Nazism, the New Deal and Technocracy.

And Mr. Burnham makes other prophecies. Germany will win the present war, by using managerial methods, and the British Empire will fall apart. The world after the revolution will consist of three superstates, based on the three centers of modern industry: western Europe, eastern Asia and northeastern North America. Russia will probably fall apart, the western section going to Germany and the eastern section to Japan. The superstates will endlessly war against one another for colonies, markets and raw materials. As for the United States, it will enter the present struggle in 1941, too late to prevent the utter defeat of Great Britain, but soon enough to seize great portions of the British Empire. It will be transformed by the crisis into one of the managerial superstates. There is likely to be an internal revolution, and certain to be a dictatorship, but some mild form of democracy will perhaps be revived after the new society has become firmly established. It is useless to struggle against these events, which are written in the stars. But since we shall have to accept them in any case, "there will be some satisfaction in doing so in terms of realities, not illusions."

Mr. Burnham is a better critic and analyst than he is a prophet. In foretelling the future, he makes the mistake of asserting that things will inevitably happen at or before a given time, whereas the past seems to teach that history has its own calendar, in which ten years is sometimes only a day, and that no event is inevitable until it has taken place. The real value of his book is that it casts a clearer light on the present. It gives us new symbols for and new signs by which to recognize the processes actually under way; it helps us to calculate their strength and their possible though by no means inevitable results. His method is to disregard the political doctrines of others—their "ideologies"—and to think purely in terms of their political behavior. It is a method as old as Machiavelli and it has never ceased to be fruitful. Time after time, Mr. Burnham helps to clarify our ideas, even when we strongly disagree with his conclusions.

I think he is right in saying that we are now in the midst of a revolution, that the capitalist system is both dying from within and being destroyed from without, and that the new system will not be socialist in Marx's sense of the word. I think he is no more than partly right in calling the revolution "managerial," and wholly wrong in saying that Russia is the nation which has, "in structural aspects, advanced furthest along the managerial road." The record shows that Russian industrial managers are much too insecure in their jobs and their persons to be called a ruling class; their actual power is less than that of Americans in similar positions. And it is in Washington, not Moscow or Berlin, that people today are talking about "the new managerial élite."

But my chief objection to Mr. Burnham's book is that, in his passion for being detached and scientific, he has omitted an essential part of what is happening in the world. He says, "I am not dealing in this book, let me repeat, with questions of 'good' or 'bad,' of what 'ought to be' or what we 'ought to do.'" And again, "As the word is used in this book, there is no moral or psychological reference of any kind." And again, "It is particularly difficult, in a discussion of totalitarianism, to exclude all moral and emotional considerations, as throughout the present book I am rigorously excluding them." But if we exclude morals and passion and even psychology from the world today, it ceases to be the world in which we live. No matter how accurately we describe the non-moral and non-emotional remainder, it does not provide a sure basis for predicting the future, since human passions may always intervene to change the course of events.

Moreover, words like force and fraud, cruelty, intolerance and devastation are something else than moral epithets. When applied to Nazism, they are a shorter way of describing certain events and types of behavior: murders in concentration camps, Jewish doctors scrubbing the sidewalks, Dr. Goebbels screaming into the radio, schools closed in Bohemia and Poland, bombers over London. To

[1] The Managerial Revolution: What Is Happening in the World, by James Burnham. New York: The John Day Company. 285 pages. $2.50.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

describe Nazism without mentioning these actions is to describe something that doesn't exist. To call it a "managerial revolution" is not to exclude moral judgments, but rather to make a favorable judgment based on incomplete evidence, both "managerial" and "revolution" being words that we have learned to surround with "good" connotations. I do not mean to say that Mr. Burnham is consciously arguing in favor of Nazism; he is as much opposed to it as the rest of us. But objectively the burden of his book would seem to be that some sort of Nazism is going to triumph anyway, and that we might as well make up our minds to surrender. MALCOLM COWLEY

Bertrand Russell's Inquiry

An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, by Bertrand Russell. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 445 pages. $3.75.

"AN INQUIRY INTO MEANING AND TRUTH" marks the beginning of a return to a type of philosophizing which the logical positivists have made unpopular among the philosophically advanced. Bertrand Russell once more raises what philosophers call "epistemological questions." He wants to know, for example, what is meant by saying that "there is empirical evidence for the truth of any belief." He rejects the standpoint of many logical positivists who believe that truth or knowledge is either a matter of logical syntax or of subjective decision. His fixed "prejudice" that there is a world independent of our consciousness makes him feel that truth is more than a primeval or sophisticated expression of our subjective needs, or a set of arbitrary rules similar in their nature to those in chess. He believes, contrary to logical positivism, that language, in which truth finds expression, tells us something of the form and structure of the world. The language of science is not for him one of any number of possible languages preferred by scientists for subjective reasons. It is preferred by scientists because no other language expresses the truth so adequately.

Russell accuses logical positivists of neglecting the study of ordinary language and of concentrating too much on the development of logical languages or syntaxes. The consequence is oversimplification of the nature of truth and knowledge. Russell does not belittle the importance of the contributions made to logic by such men as Carnap and Neurath. In fact, he thinks their contributions very important. He does feel, however, that their concern for syntactical structure has made them forget that language in actual discourse has a certain relation to experience, that it is out of this relation that truth and knowledge are born. To understand this relation, analysis must begin, not as with the logical positivists, on the very complicated and sophisticated level of mathematics and syntactics, but on a more primitive level. Analysis must begin with those types of behavioral reactions like perception and sensation and habit, which are the primitive expressions of animal reactions to the world. Study of the evolution of such psychological happenings as they grow wedded more and more intricately to language prevents excessive oversimplification, and prevents the philosopher from yielding readily to epistemological nominalism and skepticism.

Russell thinks there are three important questions which have been more or less neglected by logical positivists. The first is: Are there beliefs, statements or sentences which are true independent of language? The second is: Do we "know" truths which we cannot experience or verify? The third is: Is truth to be defined in terms of verification?

Russell answers the first question affirmatively. There are sentences whose truth depends upon non-syntactical facts or experiences. In this respect, he disagrees with most logical positivists, who believe that the truth of any sentence depends upon the possibility of deriving it from other sentences by means of certain rules. To most logical positivists, sentences that cannot be so derived are neither true nor false: they represent decisions or preferences. Russell believes that the sentence, "This is red," is not a decision or a preference, but a truth, when it happens that some event is experienced as red. The experienced redness is the "verifier" of the truth of this sentence.

Sentences of this type compose for Russell the primary language of experience. The words of which these sentences are made can be understood only when the objects or events they indicate have actually been experienced. All other words and sentences are compounded of these primary words and sentences. The primary language, in fact, is the solid foundation upon which every empirical science rests, for it contains all the direct observations or experiences which validate the less certain scientific theories and laws.

Russell also answers the second question affirmatively. He insists that there are truths which cannot be verified, yet we cannot help accepting them as true. It is because such truths cannot be verified or experienced that the need arises for logical words like "all," "and," "not," "or." Logical words do not indicate a direct experience in the same way as this-or-that red. Instead they express psychological attitudes toward experience, invented for the purpose of bridging the gap between truths that can be verified and truths that cannot. The word, "or," for example, expresses an attitude or state of hesitation, or the inability to make a choice between alternatives.

Russell thinks that it is one of the serious shortcomings of the logical positivists that they have not tried to find out the psychological basis for the invention of logical words. As a result they have failed to understand the connection of such words with the behavior of men; and so tend inevitably to look upon logical words as purely syntactical devices.

To Russell, the fact that logical words express certain psychological attitudes or states is extremely significant philosophically. Philosophically, it means that the extreme empiricism manifested among logical positivists and pragmatists is self-refuting. Russell feels that to understand experience, one must necessarily believe in truths which experience can never verify or refute.

Russell's answer to the third question is that truth is one thing, its verification another. A truth can be true even though one cannot or may not know how to verify it. For example, general beliefs like "all men are mortal" are not positively verifiable, yet there is good reason to believe them true. He accuses logical positivists, in general, of failing to analyze properly the notion of truth because they have not tried to answer one question: Does any single observation or experience give knowledge? To Russell, it is plain that if a single observation cannot give knowledge, then no series of observations possibly can.

Russell raises another objection against Dewey and instrumentalism. He does not think that Dewey is justified in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

substituting the phrase, "warranted assertibility" for the word, "truth." The two ideas, he thinks, are worlds apart in meaning. What is a "truth" is always true, but what is only a "warranted assertion" can be false.

Substantially, Russell repeats in his new work the epistemological stand he took in his earlier work, "Our Knowledge of the External World." He believes in a modified form of what is known as the "correspondence theory of truth." To him, sentences of the primary language are true because there are non-syntactical, experienced events which are the assurances of their truth. But the truth of compound sentences depends upon logical rules. If compound sentences are derivable from other sentences by these rules, then they are true. In the last instance, however, the test of the truth of any derived non-primary sentence is some primary sentence.

Russell does not say anything substantially different from what he has always believed, but his new work is very important for three reasons. The first reason is that this work is expressed in the more precise vocabulary invented by the logical positivists. Thus, he shows how the formidable vocabulary and technical apparatus of logical positivism can be more or less successfully used against it. Second, he has made his original position clearer by defending it polemically against logical positivism and instrumentalism. Third, he has helped to restore epistemology to its once honorable place among the philosophic disciplines. The problems he raises and seeks to answer so thoroughly are extremely difficult and worthy of analysis.

The very importance of this book makes it necessary to emphasize one critical point. It seems that Russell misunderstands Dewey for one reason. Russell does not ask himself the question Dewey has asked himself: How does one determine whether the knowledge gleaned from any single observation is authentic?

RUBIN GOTESKY

Public Penny-Pinching

Government Spending and Economic Expansion, by Arthur E. Burns and Donald S. Watson. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Foreign Affairs. 177 pages. Cloth, $2.50; paper, $2.
The Economic Effects of the Federal Public Works Expenditures, 1933-1938. Washington, D. C.: National Resources Planning Board. 138 pages. 25 cents.

IT IS particularly refreshing and reassuring these days to find students of public finance who are not tied hand and foot to the traditional concepts and fears of expanding public debt and replacement of certain private activity by government programs. The little volume by Burns and Watson is a scholarly, stimulating, timely work. It is free from the traditional cramped and stuffy style of conservative writers. Frankly and bluntly contradicting almost all of the major contentions of writers opposed to government spending, it explains clearly the necessity for increased governmental spending in recent years and argues that the government has spent too little to accomplish many really effective results. What little the government has spent was not lost, but rather saved, because through spending a number of idle men and machines were put to work. As the authors so aptly put it, "Had more been spent, the 1930's would have cost less."

The authors correctly show that the burden of the public debt should not be figured in terms of gross or total debt, or total interest burden, but rather in the ratio which such debt or interest burden makes to the national income. At the present time, the interest on the federal debt comprises only about one and one-half percent of the national income paid out. Thus, not only is the present interest burden a very small proportion of the national income, but large-scale deficit spending is certain to raise national income and is bound to diminish the burden of interest payments, even though it may cause total interest payments to be larger.

Although some of our more progressive and far-sighted scholars will agree with this conclusion, there must be considerable educational work done with the general public, as well as with politicians and public leaders, if general acceptance of this policy is to be won. At the present time, the average citizen is alarmed by the increasing federal debt. He does not understand the nature of the real interest burden and the significant relationships between heavy public spending and smooth operation of the economy. The unorthodox conclusions that we have not spent enough, that we have not made large government spending a systematic and regular part of our public policy but have regarded it as of an emergency or temporary nature, and that these ill advised policies have prevented our reëstablishing business activity on pre-depression or higher levels—these are certainly shocking to people who believe that heavy public spending is both unnecessary and destructive. Our citizens have still to be taught that unless American statesmen can throw off the deadening fears created by blind allegiance to old symbols and theories developed in other days and in entirely different conditions, our economy will rot from the core out because of the paradoxical stagnation of economic activity in the midst of great productive technology.

Public construction as a means of partially offsetting unemployment and idle capital, equipment and materials has not been unique with the United States. This same policy has been followed by all other important Western countries. The volume published by the National Resources Planning Board also concludes that the scale of activity of federal public-works expenditures during the thirties was not sufficient to maintain the total volume of construction and construction employment at a level approaching that of the pre-depression years. While not presented in such bold, blunt language, this report, nevertheless, augments effectively the main conclusions presented in the publication of the American Council on Foreign Affairs. The two books together comprise a good beginning in the direction of the type of presentations which must be made if a more intelligent understanding of the necessity and effectiveness of increased governmental spending to achieve economic expansion is to be widespread.

The present armaments program may be a temporary palliative, but let us hope that when our next post-war depression arrives, as it inevitably will, we shall not repeat the blunders of the public penny-pinching of the thirties. We should be planning a huge program of public works and relief projects now for this post-war period. Otherwise these years will be even more "expensive" than the thirties.

R. R. RENNE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Shadow Line

This Finer Shadow, by Harlan Cozad McIntosh. New York: The Dial Press. 408 pages. $2.75.

SINCE the author committed suicide a year ago, discouraged by repeated rejections of this novel on which he had worked for more than five years, it must, of course, be considered something of a last testament. It is probably being too glib to assume that the chief character, Martin, is the author; and yet that must be partially true, for the book seems to be written from a strong inner compulsion by a highly complex, emotionally unsettled man.

It is a curious book in many ways, often muddled and obscure, containing some self-conscious, deliberately precious writing, yet illuminated occasionally by a beautiful passage or an exceptional flash of insight, and possessing a certain emotional power. Here is an explanation of the abnormal, the pathological in human life; it might be called a study in homosexuality, or, since the basis is not scientific, a plea for a better understanding of this kind of behavior. The tragedy which results from the clash of tortured egos is all the plot there is and nothing is ever resolved except that Martin goes back to sea to find himself.

The book is something more, and this lies in the character of Martin, the sailor who leaves his ship in New York and is caught up in a current of activity he is powerless to influence. The descriptions of the sophisticated crowd who take him up are some of the best in the book—competent portraits of erotic, experimental fakes, arty faddists and sincere, tragic misfits. Martin is highly imaginative, restless, dissatisfied, trying to overcome a nameless fear which lives with him always. There is a static quality about him, an evasiveness that makes him incapable of any positive resolution, so that he becomes the focal point, the man around whom all action centers and to whom the other characters attach themselves. He is suspended between two worlds, the normal, represented by Deane, the girl who loves him, and the abnormal, represented by the homosexuals who are devoted to him and who challenge his pity and understanding.

The other characters are no less complex: Rio, the half-caste sailor who appoints himself Martin's keeper and who personifies the average man's unpitying contempt for abnormality; Carol, whose emotions, as a young boy in a camp of older men, were forced into a channel from which he could never extricate them; Roberts, whose mind, tautly balanced between sanity and insanity, finally snaps when his passion for Martin drives him to murder.

The people are perhaps more difficult to understand than the message of the author. Martin says, speaking of the whole question of homosexuality, "Was this not a possibility for every man, as well as the necessity for the cultivated group outside?" If so, the duty of normal people, after all, is to feel compassion for a thing which is as much a part of life as anything else which exists, a thing not to be merely feared or hated. So much is to the good, but unfortunately the author slips now and then into the textbook jargon: "I said they were created for balance. A necessary people forming a resilient salient between the rigidity of the sexes." They were not created for anything, of course, but simply *are*, and it is this call to pity which gives the book its importance.

MURIEL BURNS

A Reader's List

WEST WALKING YANKEE, by Henry Chapin (Howell, Soskin, $2.50). An ambitious panoramic narrative poem in blank verse of a traditional turn of phrase spiced with a rank argot and occasional fine lines. It begins with the Elizabethan explorations of Raleigh and terminates with the California gold rush, figured by successive generations of one family. Contains a mass of authentic details, resulting from years' research among private and public documents.

APPROACH TO MUSIC, by Lawrence Abbott (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50). A layman's introduction to musical mechanics and to the historical development of form and orchestration. While weak on American music and hazy in evaluating many composers discussed, it is fairly complete, concise, and written sensibly—not down. Some good musical examples and a short reference list are included.

I BOUGHT A MOUNTAIN, by Thomas Firbank (The Countryman Press, $2.75). Seven years on a sheep farm in Wales, 2,400 acres of mountain which the author bought and ran, and not as one of your cozy gentleman farmers either. He learned about gathering, dipping, shearing; he learned how to keep a flock free from dysentery; and somewhere along the way he also learned to write. Fresh with the air of a wild and formidable and rewarding outdoors.

NO HOMEWARD COURSE, by Walter Havighurst (Doubleday, Doran, $2). The story of a German raider in the Atlantic of the present war, with many representative characters and many incidents illustrating love, enmity, loyalty, betrayal. Written with haste and little heed for accuracy, according to a formula the author has apparently forgotten.

Contributors

JULIAN HUXLEY, who is a contributing editor of The New Republic, is an English biologist and writer, the author of many books on scientific and general subjects.

ALFRED WAGG, 3rd, was formerly a member of the Division of European Affairs of the Department of State and secretary of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.

GEORGE FORT MILTON was for years the editor of The Chattanooga News, which was the subject of an article by Gordon Gaskill, "A Newspaper Is Killed," in the January 15, 1940, issue of The New Republic. He is now in Washington as a consultant to the National Resources Planning Board.

DAVID W. PETEGORSKY is a member of the Department of Government at Antioch College and the author of "Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War," the English Left Book Club Choice for November, 1940.

RUBIN GOTESKY, who formerly taught Philosophy at Long Island University, has contributed to The American Sociological Review, Ethics, Public Opinion Quarterly, The Philosophical Review and The Saturday Review of Literature.

R. R. RENNE is head of the Department of Economics and Sociology at Montana State College. He is now writing a land-economics text to be published by Harpers.

MURIEL BURNS, a graduate of Smith College, is a member of the editorial staff of The New Republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED